

THE
WORKS

OF
WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

VOL. XXXVIII.

ROMANCES VOL. XXIX.

ZWICKAU,

PRINTED FOR BROTHERS SCHUMANN.

1823.

(19)



Laurent sculp.

The Bride. Vol II.

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THE
H O R S E

WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

ROMAN, YORK

WINTER

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, 1833

1833

Printed by T. Agnew & Sons, York

TALES OF MY LANDLORD,

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM.

*Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirke to Jonny Groats',
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it,
A chiel's amang you takin' notes,
An' faith he'll prent it.*

BURNS.

VOL. XIII.

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR. P. 2.

ZWICKAU,

PRINTED FOR BROTHERS SCHUMANN.

1823.

TALES OF MY LANDLORD

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM

Here, land o' Cakes and butter
From Scotland to young Green,
If there's a hole in a' your coat,
I'll mend it for ye;
A chief, among you, I'll mend it,
An' I'll mend it for ye;
Bless.

Vol. XII.

THE BIBLE OF LAMARCAON P. 2.

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ZWICKAU.

PRINTED FOR BROTHERS SCHUMANN.

1823.



## CHAPTER X.

*With throat unslaked, with black lips baked,  
Agape they heard him call;  
Gramercy they for joy did grin,  
And all at once their breath drew in  
As they had been drinking all.*

*Coleridge's*

*"Rime of the Ancient Mariner."*

HAYSTON of Bucklaw was one of the thoughtless class who never hesitate between their friend and their jest. When it was announced that the principal persons of the chace had taken their route towards Wolf's Crag, the huntsmen, as a point of civility, offered to transfer the venison to that mansion, a proffer which was readily accepted by Bucklaw, who thought much of the astonishment which their arrival in full body would occasion poor old Caleb Balderstone, and very little of the dilemma to which he was about



to expose his friend the Master, so ill circumstanced to receive such a party. But in old Caleb he had to do with a crafty and alert antagonist, prompt at supplying, upon all emergencies, evasions and excuses suitable, as he thought, to the dignity of the family.

“Praise be blessed!” said Caleb to himself, “ae leaf of the muckle gate has been swung to wi’ yestreen’s wind, and I think I can manage to shut the ither.”

But he was desirous, like a prudent governor, at the same time to get rid, if possible, of the internal enemy, in which light he considered almost every one who eat and drank, ere he took measures to exclude those whom their jocund noise now pronounced to be near at hand. He waited, therefore, with impatience until his master had shewn his two principal guests into the tower, and then commenced his operations.

“I think,” said he to the stranger menials, “that, as they are bringing the stag’s head to the castle in all honour, we, who are in-dwellers, should receive them at the gate.”

The unwary grooms had no sooner hurried out, in compliance with this insidious hint, than one folding door of the ancient gate being already closed by the wind, as has been already intimated, honest Caleb lost no time in shutting the other with a clang, which resounded from



donjon-vault to battlement. Having thus secured the pass, he forthwith indulged the excluded huntsmen in brief parley, from a small projecting window, or shot-hole, through which, in former days, the warders were wont to reconnoitre those who presented themselves before the gates. He gave them to understand, in a short and pithy speech, that the gate of the Castle was never on any account opened during meal-times — that his honour, the Master of Ravenswood, and some guests of quality, had just sat down to dinner — that there was excellent brandy at the hostler-wife's at Wolf's-hope down below — and he held out some obscure hope that the reckoning would be discharged by the Master; but this was uttered in a very dubious and oracular strain, for, like Louis XIV., Caleb Balderstone hesitated to carry finesse so far as direct falsehood, and was content to deceive, if possible, without directly lying.

This annunciation was received with surprise by some, with laughter by others, and with dismay by the expelled lacqueys, who endeavoured to demonstrate that their right of re-admission, for the purpose of waiting upon their master and mistress, was at least indisputable. But Caleb was not in a humour to understand or admit any distinctions. He stuck to his original proposition with that dogged, but con-



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venient pertinacity, which is armed against all conviction and deaf to all reasoning. Bucklaw now came from the rear of the party, and demanded admittance in a very angry tone. But the resolution of Caleb was immovable.

“If the king on the throne were at the gate,” he declared, “that his ten fingers should never open it contrair to the established use and wont of the family of Ravenswood, and his duty as their head-servant.”

Bucklaw was now extremely incensed, and with more oaths and curses than we care to repeat, declared himself most unworthily treated, and demanded peremptorily to speak with the Master of Ravenswood himself. But to this also Caleb turned a deaf ear.

“He’s as soon a-bleeze as a tap of tow the lad Bucklaw,” he said, “but the de’il of ony master’s face he shall see till he has sleepit and waken’d on’t. He’ll ken himsel better the morn’s morning. It sets the like of him, to be bringing a crew of drunken hunters here, when he kens there is but little preparation to sloken his ain drought.” And he disappeared from the window, leaving them all to digest their exclusion as they best might.

But another person, of whose presence, Caleb, in the animation of the debate, was not aware, had listened in silence to its progress.



This was the principal domestic of the stranger — a man of trust and consequence — the same, who, in the huntingfield, had accommodated Bucklaw with the use of his horse. He was in the stable when Caleb had contrived the expulsion of his fellow-servants, and thus avoided sharing the same fate from which his personal importance would certainly not have otherwise saved him.

This personage perceived the manœuvre of Caleb, easily appreciated the motive of his conduct, and knowing his master's intentions towards the family of Ravenswood, had no difficulty as to the line of conduct he ought to adopt. He took the place of Caleb (unperceived by the latter,) at the post of audience which he had just left, and announced to the assembled domestics, «that it was his master's pleasure that Lord Bittlebrain's retinue and his own should go down to the adjacent changehouse, and call for what refreshments they might have occasion for, and he should take care to discharge the lawing.»

The jolly troop of huntsmen retired from the inhospitable gate of Wolf's Crag, execrating, as they descended the steep pathway, the nig-gard and unworthy disposition of the proprietor, and damning, with more than sylvan licence, both the castle and its inhabitants. Bucklaw, with many qualities which would have made him



a man of worth and judgment in more favourable circumstances, had been so utterly neglected in point of education, that he was apt to think and feel according to the ideas of the companions of his pleasures. The praises which had recently been heaped upon himself he contrasted with the general abuse now levelled against Ravenswood — he recalled to his mind the dull and monotonous days he had spent in the tower of Wolf's Crag, compared with the joviality of his usual life — he felt, with great indignation, his exclusion from the castle, which he considered as a gross affront, and every mingled feeling led him to break off the union which he had formed with the Master of Ravenswood.

On arriving at the Change-house of the village of Wolf'shope, he unexpectedly met with an old acquaintance just alighting from his horse. This was no other than the very respectable Captain Craigengelt, who immediately came up to him, and, without appearing to retain any recollection of the indifferent terms on which they had parted, shook him by the hand in the warmest manner possible. A warm grasp of the hand was what Bucklaw could never help returning with cordiality, and no sooner had Craigengelt felt the pressure of his fingers than he knew the terms on which he stood with him.

“Long life to you, Bucklaw,” he exclaimed;



“there’s life for honest folks in this bad world yet!”

The jacobites at this period, with what propriety I know not, used, it must be noticed, the term of *honest men* as peculiarly descriptive of their own party.

“Ay, and for others besides, it seems,” answered Bucklaw; “otherways how came you to venture hither, noble Captain?”

“Who — I? — I am as free as the wind at Martinmas, that pays neither land-rent nor annual; all is explained — all settled with the honest old drivellers yonder of Auld Reekie — Pooh! pooh! they dared not keep me a week of days in durance. A certain person has better friends among them than you wot of, and can serve a friend when it is least likely.”

“Pshaw!” answered Hayston, who perfectly knew and thoroughly despised the character of this man, “none of your cogging gibberish — tell me truly, are you at liberty and in safety?”

“Free and safe as a whig baillie on the causeway of his own borough, or a canting presbyterian minister in his own pulpit — and I came to tell you that you need not remain in hiding any longer.”

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the pit? why, I am thy very Achates, man, as I have heard scholars say — hand and glove — bark and tree — thine to life and death.”

“I’ll try that in a moment,” said Bucklaw. “Thou art never without money, however thou comest by it — Lend me two pieces to wash the dust out of these honest fellows’ throats, in the first place, and then ” — —

“Two pieces? ” — twenty are at thy service, my lad — and twenty to back them.”

“Aye — say you so? ” said Bucklaw, pausing, for his natural penetration led him to suspect some extraordinary motive lay couched under such an excess of generosity. “Craigengelt, you are either an honest fellow in right good earnest, and I scarce know how to believe that — or you are cleverer than I took you for, and I scarce know how to believe that either.”

“*L’un n’empêche pas l’autre*,” said Craigengelt, “touch and try — the gold is good as ever was weighed.”

He put a quantity of gold pieces into Bucklaw’s hand, which he thrust into his pocket without either counting or looking at them, only observing, “that he was so circumstanced that he must enlist, though the devil offered the press-money; ” and then turning to the huntsmen, he called out, “Come along, my lads — all is at my cost.”



“Long life to Bucklaw!” shouted the men of the chase.

“And d——n to him that takes his share of the sport, and leaves the hunters as dry as a drum-head,” added another, by way of corollary.

“The house of Ravenswood was ance a gude and an honourable house in this land,” said an old man, “but it’s lost its credit this day, and the Master has shewn himself no better than a greedy cullion.”

And with this conclusion, which was unanimously agreed to by all who heard it, they rushed tumultuously into the house of entertainment, where they revelled till a late hour. The jovial temper of Bucklaw seldom permitted him to be nice in the choice of his associates; and on the present occasion, when his joyous debauch received additional zest from the intervention of an unusual space of sobriety, and almost abstinence, he was a happy in leading the revels, as if his comrades had been sons of princes. Craigengelt had his own purposes, in fooling him up to the top of his bent; and having some low humour, much impudence, and the power of singing a good song, understanding besides thoroughly the disposition of his regained associate, he readily succeeded in involving him bumper-deep in the festivity of the meeting.



A very different scene was in the meantime passing in the tower of Wolf's Crag. When the Master of Ravenswood left the court-yard, too much busied with his own perplexed reflections to pay attention to the manœuvre of Caleb, he ushered his guests into the great hall of the castle.

The indefatigable Balderstone, who, from choice or habit, worked on from morning to night, had, by degrees, cleared this desolate apartment of the confused reliques of the funeral banquet, and restored it to some order. But not all his skill and labour, in disposing to advantage the little furniture which remained, could remove the dark and disconsolate appearance of those ancient and disfurnished walls. The narrow windows, flanked by deep indentures into the wall, seemed formed rather to exclude than to admit the cheerful light; and the heavy and gloomy appearance of the thunder-sky added still further to the obscurity.

As Ravenswood, with the grace of a gallant of that period, but not without a certain stiffness and embarrassment of manners, handed the young lady to the upper end of the apartment, her father remained standing more near to the door, as if about to disengage himself from his hat and cloak. At this moment the clang of the portal was heard, a sound at which



the stranger started, stepped hastily to the window, and looked with an air of alarm at Ravenswood, when he saw that the gate of the court was shut, and his domestics excluded.

"You have nothing to fear, sir," said Ravenswood, gravely; "this roof retains the means of giving protection, though not welcome. Methinks," he added, "it is time that I should know who they are that have thus highly honoured my ruined dwelling?"

The young lady remained silent and motionless, and the father, to whom the question was more directly addressed, seemed in the situation of a performer who has ventured to take upon himself a part which he finds himself unable to perform, and who comes to a pause when it is most to be expected that he should speak. While he endeavoured to cover his embarrassment with the exterior ceremonials of a well-bred demeanour, it was obvious, that in making his bow, one foot shuffled forward, as if to advance — the other backward, as if with the purpose of escape — and as he undid the cape of his coat, and raised his beaver from his face, his fingers fumbled as if the one had been linked with rusted iron, or the other had weighed equal with a stone of lead. The darkness of the sky seemed to increase, as if to supply the want of those mufflings which he laid aside with



such evident reluctance. The impatience of Ravenswood increased also in proportion to the delay of the stranger, and he appeared to labour under agitation, though probably from a very different cause. He laboured to restrain his desire to speak, while the stranger, to all appearance, was at a loss for words to express what he felt it necessary to say. At length Ravenswood's impatience broke the bounds he had imposed upon it.

“I perceive,” he said, “that Sir William Ashton is unwilling to announce himself in the Castle of Wolf's Crag.”

“I had hoped it was unnecessary,” said the Lord Keeper, relieved from his silence, as a spectre by the voice of the exorcist; “and I am obliged to you, Master of Ravenswood, for breaking the ice at once, where circumstances — unhappy circumstances let me call them — rendered selfintroduction peculiarly awkward.”

“And I am not then,” said the Master of Ravenswood, gravely, “to consider the honour of this visit as purely accidental.”

“Let us distinguish a little,” — said the Keeper, assuming an appearance of ease which perhaps his heart was a stranger to; “this is an honour which I have eagerly desired for some time, but which I might never have obtained, save for the accident of the storm. My daughter



and I are alike grateful for this opportunity of thanking the brave man, to whom she owes her life and I mine."

The hatred which divided the great families in the feudal times had lost little of its bitterness, though it no longer expressed itself in deeds of open violence. Not the feelings which Ravenswood had begun to entertain towards Lucy Ashton, not the hospitality due to his guests, were able entirely to subdue, though they warmly combatted, the deep passions which arose within him, at beholding his father's foe standing in the hall of the family of which he had in a great measure accelerated the ruin. His looks glanced from the father to the daughter with an irresolution, of which Sir William Ashton did not think it proper to await the conclusion. He had now disembarrassed himself of his riding-dress, and walking up to his daughter, he undid the fastening of her mask.

"Lucy, my love," he said, raising her, and leading her toward Ravenswood, "lay aside your mask, and let us express our gratitude to the Master openly and barefaced."

"If he will condescend to accept it," was all that Lucy uttered, but in a tone so sweetly modulated, and which seemed to imply at once a feeling and a forgiving of the cold reception to which they were exposed, that, coming from a



creature so innocent and so beautiful, her words cut Ravenswood to the very heart for his harshness. He muttered something of surprise, something of confusion, and, ending with a warm and eager expression of his happiness at being able to afford her shelter under his roof, he saluted her, as the ceremonial of the time enjoined upon such occasions. Their cheeks had touched and were withdrawn from each other—Ravenswood had not quitted the hand which he had taken in kindly courtesy — a blush which attached more consequence by far than was usual to such ceremony still mantled on Lucy Ashton's beautiful cheek, when the apartment was suddenly illuminated by a flash of lightning, which seemed absolutely to swallow the darkness of the hall. Every object might have been for an instant seen distinctly. The slight and half-sinking form of Lucy Ashton, the well-proportioned and stately figure of Ravenswood, his dark features, and the fiery, yet irresolute expression of his eyes, — the old arms and scutcheons which hung on the walls of the apartment, were for an instant distinctly visible to the Keeper by a strong red brilliant glare of light. Its disappearance was almost instantly followed by a burst of thunder, for the storm-cloud was very near the castle; and the peal was so sudden and dreadful, that the old tower rock-



ed to its foundation, and every inmate concluded it was falling upon them. The soot, which had not been disturbed for centuries, showered down the huge tunnelled chimnies — lime and dust flew in clouds from the wall; and whether the lightning had actually struck the castle, or whether through the violent concussion of the air, several heavy stones were hurled from the mouldering battlements into the roaring sea beneath. It might seem as if the ancient founder of the castle was bestriding the thunder-storm, and proclaiming his displeasure at the reconciliation of his descendant with the enemy of his house.

The consternation was general, and it required the efforts of both the Lord Keeper and Ravenswood to keep Lucy from fainting. Thus was the Master a second time engaged in the most delicate and dangerous of all tasks, that of affording support and assistance to a beautiful and helpless being, whose idea, as seen before in a similar situation, had already become a favourite of his imagination, both when awake and when slumbering. If the Genius of the House really condemned a union betwixt the Master and his fair guest, the means by which he expressed his sentiments were as unhappily chosen as if he had been a mere mortal. The train of little attentions, absolutely necessary to sooth



the young lady's mind, and aid her in composing her spirits, necessarily threw the Master of Ravenswood into such an intercourse with her father, as was calculated, for the moment at least, to break down the barrier of feudal enmity which divided them. To express himself churlishly, or even coldly, towards an old man, whose daughter (and *such* a daughter) lay before them, overpowered with natural terror — and all this under his own roof — the thing was impossible; and by the time that Lucy, extending a hand to each, was able to thank them for their kindness, the Master felt that his sentiments of hostility towards the Lord Keeper were by no means those most predominant in his bosom.

The weather, her state of health, the absence of her attendants, all prevented the possibility of Lucy Ashton renewing her journey to Bittle-brains-House, which was full five miles distant; and the Master of Ravenswood could not but, in common courtesy, offer the shelter of his roof for the rest of the day and for the night. But a flush of less soft expression, a look much more habitual to his features, resumed predominance when he mentioned how meanly he was provided for the entertainment of his guests.

“Do not mention deficiencies,” said the Lord Keeper, eager to interrupt him and prevent his



resuming an alarming topic; "you are designed for the continent, and your house is probably for the present unfurnished. All this we understand; but if you mention inconvenience, you will oblige us to seek accommodations in the hamlet."

As the Master of Ravenswood was about to reply, the door of the hall opened, and Caleb Balderstone rushed in.



## CHAPTER XI.

*Let them have meat enough, woman — half  
a hen;*

*There be old rotten pilchards — put them off  
too;*

*'Tis but a little new anointing of them,  
And a strong onion, that confounds the savour.*

*Love's Pilgrimage.*

THE thunder-bolt, which had stunned all who were within hearing of it, had only served to awaken the bold and inventive genius of the flower of Majors-Domo. Almost before the clatter had ceased, and while there was yet scarce an assurance whether the castle was standing or falling, Caleb exclaimed, «Heavens be praised! — this comes to hand like the bowl of a pintstoup.» He then barred the kitchen door in the face of the Lord Keeper's servant, whom he perceived returning from the party at the gate, and mut-



tering, "how the de'il came he in? — but de'il may care — Mysie, what are ye sitting shaking and greeting in the chimney-nuik for? Come here — or stay where ye are, and skirl as loud as ye can — it's a' ye're guid for — I say, ye auld deevil, skirl — skirl — louder — louder — woman! — gar the gentles hear ye in the ha' — I have heard ye as far off as the Bass for a less matter. And stay — down wi' that crockery " —

And with a sweeping blow, he threw down from a shelf some articles of pewter and earthen ware. He exalted his voice amid the clatter, shouting and roaring in a manner which changed Mysie's hysterical apprehensions of the thunder into fears that her old fellow-servant was gone distracted. "He has dung down a' the bits o' pigs too — the only thing we had left to haud a scup milk — and he has spilt the hatted kitt that was for the Master's dinner. Mercy save us, the auld man's ga'en wud wi' the thunner!"

"Haud your tonque, ye b — —," said Caleb, in the impetuous and overbearing triumph of successful invention, "a's provided now — dinner and a' thing — the thunner's done a' in a clap of a hand!" —

"Puir man, he's muckle astray," said Mysie, looking at him with a mixture of pity and alarm; "I wish he may ever come hame to himsell again."



“Here, ye auld doited deevil,” said Caleb, still exulting in his extrication from a dilemma which seemed insurmountable; “keep the strange man out of the kitchen — swear the thunner came down the chimley, and spoiled the best dinner ye ever dressed — beef — bacon — kid — lark — leveret — wild-fowl — venison, and what not. Lay it on thick, and never mind expences. I’ll awa’ up to the ha’ — make a’ the confusion ye can — but be sure ye keep out the strange servant.”

With these charges to his ally, Caleb posted up to the hall, but stopping to reconnoitre through an aperture, which time, for the convenience of many a domestic in succession, had made in the door, and perceiving the situation of Miss Ashton, he had prudence enough to make a pause, both to avoid adding to her alarm, and in order to secure attention to his account of the disastrous effects of the thunder.

But when he perceived that the lady was recovered, and heard the conversation turn upon the accommodation and refreshment which the castle afforded, he thought it time to burst into the room in the manner announced in the last chapter.

“Wull a wins! — wull a wins! — such a misfortune to befa’ the House of Ravenswood, and I to live to see it!”



“What is the matter, Caleb?” said his master, somewhat alarmed in his turn; “has any part of the castle fallen?”

“Castle fa’an? — na, but the sute’s fa’an, and the thunner’s come right down the kitchen-lumm, and the things are a’ lying here awa’, there awa’, like the Laird o’ Hotchpotch’s lands — and wi’ brave guests of honour and quality to entertain,” — a low bow here to Sir William Ashton and his daughter, — “and naething left in the house fit to present for dinner — or for supper either, for aught that I can see.”

“I verily believe you, Caleb,” said Ravenswood drily.

Balderstone here turned to his master a half-upbraiding, half imploring countenance, and edged towards him as he repeated. “It was nae great matter of preparation; but just something added to your honour’s ordinary course of fare — *petty cover*, as they say at the Louvre — three courses and the fruit.”

“Keep your intolerable nonsense to yourself, you old fool,” said Ravenswood, mortified at his officiousness, yet not knowing how to contradict him, without the risk of giving rise to scenes yet more ridiculous.

Caleb saw his advantage, and resolved to improve it. But first, observing that the Lord Keeper’s servant entered the apartment, and



spoke apart with his master, he took the same opportunity to whisper a few words into Ravenswood's ear — "Haud your tongue for Heaven's sake, sir — if it's my pleasure to hazard my soul in telling lies for the honour of the family, it's nae business of yours — and if ye let me gang on quietly, I'll be moderate in my banquet; but if ye contradict me, de'il but I dress ye a dinner fit for a duke."

Ravenswood, in fact, thought it would be best to let his officious butler run on; who proceeded to enumerate upon his fingers, — "No muckle provision — might hae served four persons of honour, — first course, capons in white broth — roast kid — bacon with reverence — second course, roasted leverit — butter crabs — a veal florentine — third course, black-cock — it's black eneugh now wi' the sute — plumdamas — a tart — a flam — and some nonsense sweet things, and comfits — and that's a," he said, seeing the impatience of his master; "that's just a' was o't — forbye the apples and pears."

Miss Ashton had by degrees gathered her spirits, so far as to pay some attention to what was going on; and observing the restrained impatience of Ravenswood, contrasted with the peculiar determination of manner with which Caleb detailed his imaginary banquet, the whole struck her as so ridiculous, that, despite every effort to



the contrary, she burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, in which she was joined by her father, though with more moderation, and finally by the Master of Ravenswood himself, though conscious that the jest was at his own expence. Their mirth — for a scene which we read with little emotion often appears extremely ludicrous to the spectators — made the old vault ring again. They ceased — they renewed — they ceased — they renewed again their shouts of laughter! Caleb in the meantime stood his ground with a grave, angry, and scornful dignity, which greatly enhanced the ridicule of the scene, and the mirth of the spectators.

At length, when the voices, and nearly the strength of the laughers, were exhausted, he exclaimed, with very little ceremony, "The de'il's in the gentles! they breakfast sae lordly, that the loss of the best dinner ever cook pat fingers to, makes them as merry as if it were the best jeest in a' George Buchanan. If there was as little in your honours' wames, as there is in Caleb Balderstone's, less cackling wad serve ye on sic a gravaminous subject."

Caleb's blunt expression of resentment again awakened the mirth of the company, which, by the way, he regarded not only as an aggression upon the dignity of the family, but a special contempt of the eloquence with which he



himself had summed up the extent of their supposed losses; — «a description of a dinner,” as he said afterwards to Mysie, «that wad hae made a fu’ man hungry, and them to sit there laughing at it.”

«But,” said Miss Ashton, composing her countenance as well as she could, «are all these delicacies so totally destroyed, that no scrap can be collected?”

«Collected, my leddy! what wad ye collect out of the sute and the ass? Ye may gang down yoursell, and look into our kitchen — the cook-maid in the trembling exies — the gude viviers lying a’ about — beef — capons, and white broth — florentine and flams — bacon wi’ reverence, and a’ the sweet confections and whims; ye’ll see them a’, my leddy — that is,” said he correcting himself, «ye’ll no see ony of them now, for the cook has sweeped them up, as was weel her part; but ye’ll see the white broth where it was spilt. I pat my fingers in it, and it tastes as like sour-milk as ony thing else; if that isna the effect of thunner, I kenna what is. — This gentleman here couldna but hear the clash of our haill dishes, china and silver thegither.”

The Lord Keeper’s domestic, though a statesman’s attendant, and of course trained to command his countenance upon all occasions, was



somewhat discomposed by this appeal, to which he only answered by a bow.

„I think, Mr Butler,” said the Lord Keeper, who began to be afraid lest the prolongation of this scene should at length displease Ravenswood, — “I think, that were you to retire with my servant Lockhard — he has travelled, and is quite accustomed to accidents and contingencies of every kind, and I hope betwixt you, you may find out some mode of supply at this emergency.”

„His honour kens,” said Caleb, who, however hopeless of himself of accomplishing what was desirable, would, like the high-spirited elephant, rather have died in the effort, than brooked the aid of a brother in commission; „his honour kens weel I need nae counsellor, when the honour of the house is concerned.”

„I should be unjust if I denied it, Caleb,” said his master; „but your art lies chiefly in making apologies, upon which we can no more dine, than upon the bill of fare of our thunder-blasted dinner. Now, possibly, Mr Lockhard’s talent may consist in finding some substitute for that, which certainly is not, and has in all probability never been.”

„Your honour is pleased to be facetious,” said Caleb, „but I am sure, that for the warst, for a walk as far as Wolf’s-hope, I could dine



W O R L D

WALTER SCOTT

THE

ROMANCE OF THE

WARRIOR

THE

1833

Edinburgh



# TALES OF MY LANDLORD,

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM.

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*Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,  
Frae Maidenkirke to Jonny Groats',  
If there's a hole in a' your coats,  
I rede ye tent it,  
A chiel's amang you takin' notes,  
An' faith he'll prent it.*

BURNS.

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VOL. XIII.

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR. P. 2.

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ZWICKAU,

PRINTED FOR BROTHERS SCHUMANN.

1823.



# TALLES OF MY LANDLORD

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM

There, Lord of Cakes and butter  
Fine Mashed to honey Cream,  
If there's a hole in a your coat,  
I shall be sent to  
A chief among you little ones,  
The little will never be  
Blessed.

Vol. XII.

THE BIRTH OF LAMWENGOON P. 2.

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ZWICKAU.

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CHAPTER X.

*With throat unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard him call;
Gramercy they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in
As they had been drinking all.*

Coleridge's

"Rime of the Ancient Mariner."

HAYSTON of Bucklaw was one of the thoughtless class who never hesitate between their friend and their jest. When it was announced that the principal persons of the chace had taken their route towards Wolf's Crag, the huntsmen, as a point of civility, offered to transfer the venison to that mansion, a proffer which was readily accepted by Bucklaw, who thought much of the astonishment which their arrival in full body would occasion poor old Caleb Balderstone, and very little of the dilemma to which he was about

to expose his friend the Master, so ill circumstanced to receive such a party. But in old Caleb he had to do with a crafty and alert antagonist, prompt at supplying, upon all emergencies, evasions and excuses suitable, as he thought, to the dignity of the family.

“Praise be blessed!” said Caleb to himself, „ae leaf of the muckle gate has been swung to wi’ yestreen’s wind, and I think I can manage to shut the ither.”

But he was desirous, like a prudent governor, at the same time to get rid, if possible, of the internal enemy, in which light he considered almost every one who eat and drank, ere he took measures to exclude those whom their jocund noise now pronounced to be near at hand. He waited, therefore, with impatience until his master had shewn his two principal guests into the tower, and then commenced his operations.

“I think,” said he to the stranger menials, „that, as they are bringing the stag’s head to the castle in all honour, we, who are in-dwellers, should receive them at the gate.”

The unwary grooms had no sooner hurried out, in compliance with this insidious hint, than one folding door of the ancient gate being already closed by the wind, as has been already intimated, honest Caleb lost no time in shutting the other with a clang, which resounded from

donjon-vault to battlement. Having thus secured the pass, he forthwith indulged the excluded huntsmen in brief parley, from a small projecting window, or shot-hole, through which, in former days, the warders were wont to reconnoitre those who presented themselves before the gates. He gave them to understand, in a short and pithy speech, that the gate of the Castle was never on any account opened during meal-times — that his honour, the Master of Ravenswood, and some guests of quality, had just sat down to dinner — that there was excellent brandy at the hostler-wife's at Wolf's-hope down below — and he held out some obscure hope that the reckoning would be discharged by the Master; but this was uttered in a very dubious and oracular strain, for, like Louis XIV., Caleb Balderstone hesitated to carry finesse so far as direct falsehood, and was content to deceive, if possible, without directly lying.

This annunciation was received with surprise by some, with laughter by others, and with dismay by the expelled lacqueys, who endeavoured to demonstrate that their right of re-admission, for the purpose of waiting upon their master and mistress, was at least indisputable. But Caleb was not in a humour to understand or admit any distinctions. He stuck to his original proposition with that dogged, but con-

venient pertinacity, which is armed against all conviction and deaf to all reasoning. Bucklaw now came from the rear of the party, and demanded admittance in a very angry tone. But the resolution of Caleb was immovable.

“If the king on the throne were at the gate,” he declared, “that his ten fingers should never open it contrair to the established use and wont of the family of Ravenswood, and his duty as their head-servant.”

Bucklaw was now extremely incensed, and with more oaths and curses than we care to repeat, declared himself most unworthily treated, and demanded peremptorily to speak with the Master of Ravenswood himself. But to this also Caleb turned a deaf ear.

“He’s as soon a-bleeze as a tap of tow the lad Bucklaw,” he said, “but the de’il of ony master’s face he shall see till he has sleepit and waken’d on’t. He’ll ken himsel better the morn’s morning. It sets the like of him, to be bringing a crew of drunken hunters here, when he kens there is but little preparation to sloken his ain drought.” And he disappeared from the window, leaving them all to digest their exclusion as they best might.

But another person, of whose presence, Caleb, in the animation of the debate, was not aware, had listened in silence to its progress.

This was the principal domestic of the stranger — a man of trust and consequence — the same, who, in the huntingfield, had accommodated Bucklaw with the use of his horse. He was in the stable when Caleb had contrived the expulsion of his fellow-servants, and thus avoided sharing the same fate from which his personal importance would certainly not have otherwise saved him.

This personage perceived the manœuvre of Caleb, easily appreciated the motive of his conduct, and knowing his master's intentions towards the family of Ravenswood, had no difficulty as to the line of conduct he ought to adopt. He took the place of Caleb (unperceived by the latter,) at the post of audience which he had just left, and announced to the assembled domestics, "that it was his master's pleasure that Lord Bittlebrain's retinue and his own should go down to the adjacent changehouse, and call for what refreshments they might have occasion for, and he should take care to discharge the lawing."

The jolly troop of huntsmen retired from the inhospitable gate of Wolf's Crag, execrating, as they descended the steep pathway, the niggard and unworthy disposition of the proprietor, and damning, with more than sylvan licence, both the castle and its inhabitants. Bucklaw, with many qualities which would have made him

a man of worth and judgment in more favourable circumstances, had been so utterly neglected in point of education, that he was apt to think and feel according to the ideas of the companions of his pleasures. The praises which had recently been heaped upon himself he contrasted with the general abuse now levelled against Ravenswood — he recalled to his mind the dull and monotonous days he had spent in the tower of Wolf's Crag, compared with the joviality of his usual life — he felt, with great indignation, his exclusion from the castle, which he considered as a gross affront, and every mingled feeling led him to break off the union which he had formed with the Master of Ravenswood.

On arriving at the Change-house of the village of Wolfshope, he unexpectedly met with an old acquaintance just alighting from his horse. This was no other than the very respectable Captain Craigengelt, who immediately came up to him, and, without appearing to retain any recollection of the indifferent terms on which they had parted, shook him by the hand in the warmest manner possible. A warm grasp of the hand was what Bucklaw could never help returning with cordiality, and no sooner had Craigengelt felt the pressure of his fingers than he knew the terms on which he stood with him.

"Long life to you, Bucklaw," he exclaimed;

“there’s life for honest folks in this bad world yet!”

The jacobites at this period, with what propriety I know not, used, it must be noticed, the term of *honest men* as peculiarly descriptive of their own party.

“Ay, and for others besides, it seems,” answered Bucklaw; “otherways how came you to venture hither, noble Captain?”

“Who — I? — I am as free as the wind at Martinmas, that pays neither land-rent nor annual; all is explained — all settled with the honest old drivellers yonder of Auld Reekie — Pooh! pooh! they dared not keep me a week of days in durance. A certain person has better friends among them than you wot of, and can serve a friend when it is least likely.”

“Pshaw!” answered Hayston, who perfectly knew and thoroughly despised the character of this man, “none of your cogging gibberish — tell me truly, are you at liberty and in safety?”

“Free and safe as a whig baillie on the causeway of his own borough, or a canting presbyterian minister in his own pulpit — and I came to tell you that you need not remain in hiding any longer.”

“Then I suppose you call yourself my friend, Captain Craigengelt?” said Bucklaw.

“Friend!” replied Craigengelt, “my cock of

the pit? why, I am thy very Achates, man, as I have heard scholars say — hand and glove — bark and tree — thine to life and death.”

“I’ll try that in a moment,” said Bucklaw. “Thou art never without money, however thou comest by it — Lend me two pieces to wash the dust out of these honest fellows’ throats, in the first place, and then ” — —

“Two pieces? ” — twenty are at thy service, my lad — and twenty to back them.”

“Aye — say you so? ” said Bucklaw, pausing, for his natural penetration led him to suspect some extraordinary motive lay couched under such an excess of generosity. “Craigengelt, you are either an honest fellow in right good earnest, and I scarce know how to believe that — or you are cleverer than I took you for, and I scarce know how to believe that either.”

“*L’un n’empêche pas l’autre*,” said Craigengelt, “touch and try — the gold is good as ever was weighed.”

He put a quantity of gold pieces into Bucklaw’s hand, which he thrust into his pocket without either counting or looking at them, only observing, “that he was so circumstanced that he must enlist, though the devil offered the press-money; ” and then turning to the huntsmen, he called out, “Come along, my lads — all is at my cost.”

“Long life to Bucklaw!” shouted the men of the chase.

“And d——n to him that takes his share of the sport, and leaves the hunters as dry as a drum-head,” added another, by way of corollary.

“The house of Ravenswood was ance a gude and an honourable house in this land,” said an old man, “but it’s lost its credit this day, and the Master has shewn himself no better than a greedy cullion.”

And with this conclusion, which was unanimously agreed to by all who heard it, they rushed tumultuously into the house of entertainment, where they revelled till a late hour. The jovial temper of Bucklaw seldom permitted him to be nice in the choice of his associates; and on the present occasion, when his joyous debauch received additional zest from the intervention of an unusual space of sobriety, and almost abstinence, he was a happy in leading the revels, as if his comrades had been sons of princes. Craigengelt had his own purposes, in fooling him up to the top of his bent; and having some low humour, much impudence, and the power of singing a good song, understanding besides thoroughly the disposition of his regained associate, he readily succeeded in involving him bumper-deep in the festivity of the meeting.

A very different scene was in the meantime passing in the tower of Wolf's Crag. When the Master of Ravenswood left the court-yard, too much busied with his own perplexed reflections to pay attention to the manœuvre of Caleb, he ushered his guests into the great hall of the castle.

The indefatigable Balderstone, who, from choice or habit, worked on from morning to night, had, by degrees, cleared this desolate apartment of the confused reliques of the funeral banquet, and restored it to some order. But not all his skill and labour, in disposing to advantage the little furniture which remained, could remove the dark and disconsolate appearance of those ancient and disfurnished walls. The narrow windows, flanked by deep indentures into the wall, seemed formed rather to exclude than to admit the cheerful light; and the heavy and gloomy appearance of the thunder-sky added still further to the obscurity.

As Ravenswood, with the grace of a gallant of that period, but not without a certain stiffness and embarrassment of manners, handed the young lady to the upper end of the apartment, her father remained standing more near to the door, as if about to disengage himself from his hat and cloak. At this moment the clang of the portal was heard, a sound at which

the stranger started, stepped hastily to the window, and looked with an air of alarm at Ravenswood, when he saw that the gate of the court was shut, and his domestics excluded.

“You have nothing to fear, sir,” said Ravenswood, gravely; “this roof retains the means of giving protection, though not welcome. Methinks,” he added, “it is time that I should know who they are that have thus highly honoured my ruined dwelling?”

The young lady remained silent and motionless, and the father, to whom the question was more directly addressed, seemed in the situation of a performer who has ventured to take upon himself a part which he finds himself unable to perform, and who comes to a pause when it is most to be expected that he should speak. While he endeavoured to cover his embarrassment with the exterior ceremonials of a well-bred demeanour, it was obvious, that in making his bow, one foot shuffled forward, as if to advance — the other backward, as if with the purpose of escape — and as he undid the cape of his coat, and raised his beaver from his face, his fingers fumbled as if the one had been linked with rusted iron, or the other had weighed equal with a stone of lead. The darkness of the sky seemed to increase, as if to supply the want of those mufflings which he laid aside with

such evident reluctance. The impatience of Ravenswood increased also in proportion to the delay of the stranger, and he appeared to labour under agitation, though probably from a very different cause. He laboured to restrain his desire to speak, while the stranger, to all appearance, was at a loss for words to express what he felt it necessary to say. At length Ravenswood's impatience broke the bounds he had imposed upon it.

"I perceive," he said, "that Sir William Ashton is unwilling to announce himself in the Castle of Wolf's Crag."

"I had hoped it was unnecessary," said the Lord Keeper, relieved from his silence, as a spectre by the voice of the exorcist; "and I am obliged to you, Master of Ravenswood, for breaking the ice at once, where circumstances — unhappy circumstances let me call them — rendered selfintroduction peculiarly awkward."

"And I am not then," said the Master of Ravenswood, gravely, "to consider the honour of this visit as purely accidental."

"Let us distinguish a little," — said the Keeper, assuming an appearance of ease which perhaps his heart was a stranger to; "this is an honour which I have eagerly desired for some time, but which I might never have obtained, save for the accident of the storm. My daughter

and I are alike grateful for this opportunity of thanking the brave man, to whom she owes her life and I mine."

The hatred which divided the great families in the feudal times had lost little of its bitterness, though it no longer expressed itself in deeds of open violence. Not the feelings which Ravenswood had begun to entertain towards Lucy Ashton, not the hospitality due to his guests, were able entirely to subdue, though they warmly combatted, the deep passions which arose within him, at beholding his father's foe standing in the hall of the family of which he had in a great measure accelerated the ruin. His looks glanced from the father to the daughter with an irresolution, of which Sir William Ashton did not think it proper to await the conclusion. He had now disembarrassed himself of his riding-dress, and walking up to his daughter, he undid the fastening of her mask.

"Lucy, my love," he said, raising her, and leading her toward Ravenswood, "lay aside your mask, and let us express our gratitude to the Master openly and barefaced."

"If he will condescend to accept it," was all that Lucy uttered, but in a tone so sweetly modulated, and which seemed to imply at once a feeling and a forgiving of the cold reception to which they were exposed, that, coming from a

creature so innocent and so beautiful, her words cut Ravenswood to the very heart for his harshness. He muttered something of surprise, something of confusion, and, ending with a warm and eager expression of his happiness at being able to afford her shelter under his roof, he saluted her, as the ceremonial of the time enjoined upon such occasions. Their cheeks had touched and were withdrawn from each other—Ravenswood had not quitted the hand which he had taken in kindly courtesy — a blush which attached more consequence by far than was usual to such ceremony still mantled on Lucy Ashton's beautiful cheek, when the apartment was suddenly illuminated by a flash of lightning, which seemed absolutely to swallow the darkness of the hall. Every object might have been for an instant seen distinctly. The slight and half-sinking form of Lucy Ashton, the well-proportioned and stately figure of Ravenswood, his dark features, and the fiery, yet irresolute expression of his eyes, — the old arms and scutcheons which hung on the walls of the apartment, were for an instant distinctly visible to the Keeper by a strong red brilliant glare of light. Its disappearance was almost instantly followed by a burst of thunder, for the storm-cloud was very near the castle; and the peal was so sudden and dreadful, that the old tower rock-

ed to its foundation, and every inmate concluded it was falling upon them. The soot, which had not been disturbed for centuries, showered down the huge tunnelled chimnies — lime and dust flew in clouds from the wall; and whether the lightning had actually struck the castle, or whether through the violent concussion of the air, several heavy stones were hurled from the mouldering battlements into the roaring sea beneath. It might seem as if the ancient founder of the castle was bestriding the thunder-storm, and proclaiming his displeasure at the reconciliation of his descendant with the enemy of his house.

The consternation was general, and it required the efforts of both the Lord Keeper and Ravenswood to keep Lucy from fainting. Thus was the Master a second time engaged in the most delicate and dangerous of all tasks, that of affording support and assistance to a beautiful and helpless being, whose idea, as seen before in a similar situation, had already become a favourite of his imagination, both when awake and when slumbering. If the Genius of the House really condemned a union betwixt the Master and his fair guest, the means by which he expressed his sentiments were as unhappily chosen as if he had been a mere mortal. The train of little attentions, absolutely necessary to sooth

the young lady's mind, and aid her in composing her spirits, necessarily threw the Master of Ravenswood into such an intercourse with her father, as was calculated, for the moment at least, to break down the barrier of feudal enmity which divided them. To express himself churlishly, or even coldly, towards an old man, whose daughter (and *such* a daughter) lay before them, overpowered with natural terror — and all this under his own roof — the thing was impossible; and by the time that Lucy, extending a hand to each, was able to thank them for their kindness, the Master felt that his sentiments of hostility towards the Lord Keeper were by no means those most predominant in his bosom.

The weather, her state of health, the absence of her attendants, all prevented the possibility of Lucy Ashton renewing her journey to Bittle-brains-House, which was full five miles distant; and the Master of Ravenswood could not but, in common courtesy, offer the shelter of his roof for the rest of the day and for the night. But a flush of less soft expression, a look much more habitual to his features, resumed predominance when he mentioned how meanly he was provided for the entertainment of his guests.

“Do not mention deficiencies,” said the Lord Keeper, eager to interrupt him and prevent his

resuming an alarming topic; "you are designed for the continent, and your house is probably for the present unfurnished. All this we understand; but if you mention inconvenience, you will oblige us to seek accommodations in the hamlet."

As the Master of Ravenswood was about to reply, the door of the hall opened, and Caleb Balderstone rushed in.


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CHAPTER XI.

*Let them have meat enough, woman — half  
a hen;*

*There be old rotten pilchards — put them off  
too;*

*'Tis but a little new anointing of them,  
And a strong onion, that confounds the savour.*

*Love's Pilgrimage.*

---

THE thunder-bolt, which had stunned all who were within hearing of it, had only served to awaken the bold and inventive genius of the flower of Majors-Domo. Almost before the clatter had ceased, and while there was yet scarce an assurance whether the castle was standing or falling, Caleb exclaimed, "Heavens be praised! — this comes to hand like the bowl of a pintstoup." He then barred the kitchen door in the face of the Lord Keeper's servant, whom he perceived returning from the party at the gate, and mut-



tering, "how the de'il came he in? — but de'il may care — Mysie, what are ye sitting shaking and greeting in the chimney-nuik for? Come here — or stay where ye are, and skirl as loud as ye can — it's a' ye're guid for — I say, ye auld deevil, skirl — skirl — louder — louder — woman! — gar the gentles hear ye in the ha' — I have heard ye as far off as the Bass for a less matter. And stay — down wi' that crockery " —

And with a sweeping blow, he threw down from a shelf some articles of pewter and earthen ware. He exalted his voice amid the clatter, shouting and roaring in a manner which changed Mysie's hysterical apprehensions of the thunder into fears that her old fellow-servant was gone distracted. "He has dung down a' the bits o' pigs too — the only thing we had left to haud a scup milk — and he has spilt the hatted kitt that was for the Master's dinner. Mercy save us, the auld man's ga'en wud wi' the thunner!"

"Haud your tonque, ye b — —," said Caleb, in the impetuous and overbearing triumph of successful invention, "a's provided now — dinner and a' thing — the thunner's done a' in a clap of a hand!" —

"Puir man, he's muckle astray," said Mysie, looking at him with a mixture of pity and alarm; "I wish he may ever come hame to himsell again."



“Here, ye auld doited deevil,” said Caleb, still exulting in his extrication from a dilemma which seemed insurmountable; “keep the strange man out of the kitchen — swear the thunner came down the chimley, and spoiled the best dinner ye ever dressed — beef — bacon — kid — lark — leveret — wild-fowl — venison, and what not. Lay it on thick, and never mind expences. I’ll awa’ up to the ha’ — make a’ the confusion ye can — but be sure ye keep out the strange servant.”

With these charges to his ally, Caleb posted up to the hall, but stopping to reconnoitre through an aperture, which time, for the convenience of many a domestic in succession, had made in the door, and perceiving the situation of Miss Ashton, he had prudence enough to make a pause, both to avoid adding to her alarm, and in order to secure attention to his account of the disastrous effects of the thunder.

But when he perceived that the lady was recovered, and heard the conversation turn upon the accommodation and refreshment which the castle afforded, he thought it time to burst into the room in the manner announced in the last chapter.

“Wull a wins! — wull a wins! — such a misfortune to befa’ the House of Ravenswood, and I to live to see it!”



“What is the matter, Caleb?” said his master, somewhat alarmed in his turn; “has any part of the castle fallen?”

“Castle fa’an? — na, but the sute’s fa’an, and the thunner’s come right down the kitchen-lumm, and the things are a’ lying here awa’, there awa’, like the Laird o’ Hotchpotch’s lands — and wi’ brave guests of honour and quality to entertain,” — a low bow here to Sir William Ashton and his daughter, — “and naething left in the house fit to present for dinner — or for supper either, for aught that I can see.”

“I verily believe you, Caleb,” said Ravenswood drily.

Balderstone here turned to his master a half-upbraiding, half imploring countenance, and edged towards him as he repeated. “It was nae great matter of preparation; but just something added to your honour’s ordinary course of fare — *petty cover*, as they say at the Louvre — three courses and the fruit.”

“Keep your intolerable nonsense to yourself, you old fool,” said Ravenswood, mortified at his officiousness, yet not knowing how to contradict him, without the risk of giving rise to scenes yet more ridiculous.

Caleb saw his advantage, and resolved to improve it. But first, observing that the Lord Keeper’s servant entered the apartment, and



spoke apart with his master, he took the same opportunity to whisper a few words into Ravenswood's ear — "Haud your tongue for Heaven's sake, sir — if it's my pleasure to hazard my soul in telling lies for the honour of the family, it's nae business of yours — and if ye let me gang on quietly, I'll be moderate in my banquet; but if ye contradict me, de'il but I dress ye a dinner fit for a duke."

Ravenswood, in fact, thought it would be best to let his officious butler run on; who proceeded to enumerate upon his fingers, — "No muckle provision — might hae served four persons of honour, — first course, capons in white broth — roast kid — bacon with reverence — second course, roasted leverit — butter crabs — a veal florentine — third course, black-cock — it's black eneugh now wi' the sute — plumdamas — a tart — a flam — and some nonsense sweet things, and comfits — and that's a," he said, seeing the impatience of his master; "that's just a' was o't — forbye the apples and pears."

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himself had summed up the extent of their supposed losses; — «a description of a dinner,” as he said afterwards to Mysie, «that wad hae made a fu’ man hungry, and them to sit there laughing at it.”

«But,” said Miss Ashton, composing her countenance as well as she could, «are all these delicacies so totally destroyed, that no scrap can be collected?”

«Collected, my leddy! what wad ye collect out of the sute and the ass? Ye may gang down yoursell, and look into our kitchen — the cook-maid in the trembling exies — the gude viviers lying a’ about — beef — capons, and white broth — florentine and flams — bacon wi’ reverence, and a’ the sweet confections and whims; ye’ll see them a’, my leddy — that is,” said he correcting himself, «ye’ll no see ony of them now, for the cook has sweeped them up, as was weel her part; but ye’ll see the white broth where it was spilt. I pat my fingers in it, and it tastes as like sour-milk as ony thing else; if that isna the effect of thunner, I kenna what is. — This gentleman here couldna but hear the clash of our haill dishes, china and silver thegither.”

The Lord Keeper’s domestic, though a statesman’s attendant, and of course trained to command his countenance upon all occasions, was



somewhat discomposed by this appeal, to which he only answered by a bow.

„I think, Mr Butler,” said the Lord Keeper, who began to be afraid lest the prolongation of this scene should at length displease Ravenswood, — “I think, that were you to retire with my servant Lockhard — he has travelled, and is quite accustomed to accidents and contingencies of every kind, and I hope betwixt you, you may find out some mode of supply at this emergency.”

„His honour kens,” said Caleb, who, however hopeless of himself of accomplishing what was desirable, would, like the high-spirited elephant, rather have died in the effort, than brooked the aid of a brother in commission; „his honour kens weel I need nae counsellor, when the honour of the house is concerned.”

„I should be unjust if I denied it, Caleb,” said his master; „but your art lies chiefly in making apologies, upon which we can no more dine, than upon the bill of fare of our thunder-blasted dinner. Now, possibly, Mr Lockhard’s talent may consist in finding some substitute for that, which certainly is not, and has in all probability never been.”

„Your honour is pleased to be facetious,” said Caleb, „but I am sure, that for the warst, for a walk as far as Wolf’s-hope, I could dine



forty men, — no that the folk there deserve your honour's custom. They hae been ill advised in the matter of the duty - eggs and butter, I winna deny that."

"Do go consult together," said the Master, "go down to the village, and do the best you can. We must not let our guests remain without refreshment, to save the honour of a ruined family. And here, Caleb — take my purse; I believe that will prove your best ally."

"Purse? purse, indeed?" quoth Caleb, indignantly flinging out of the room, — "what suld I do wi' your honour's purse, on your ain grund? I trust we are no to pay for our ain?"

The servants left the hall; and the door was no sooner shut, than the Lord Keeper began to apologize for the rudeness of his mirth; and Lucy to hope she had given no pain or offence to the kind-hearted faithful old man.

"Caleb and I must both learn, madam, to undergo with good humour, or at least with patience, the ridicule which every where attaches itself to poverty."

"You do yourself injustice, Master of Ravenswood, on my word of honour," answered his elder guest. "I believe I know more of your affairs than you do yourself, and I hope to shew you, that I am interested in them; and that — in short, that your prospects are better than



you apprehend. In the meantime, I can conceive nothing so respectable, as the spirit which rises above misfortune, and prefers honourable privations to debt or dependence."

Whether from fear of offending the delicacy, or awakening the pride of the Master, the Lord Keeper made these allusions with an appearance of fearful and hesitating reserve, and seemed to be afraid that he was intruding too far, in venturing to touch, however lightly, upon such a topic, even when the Master had led to it. In short, he appeared at once pushed on by his desire of appearing friendly, and held back by the fear of intrusion. It was no wonder that the Master of Ravenswood, little acquainted as he then was with life, should have given this consummate courtier credit for more sincerity than was probably to be found in a score of his cast. He answered, however, with reserve, that he was indebted to all who might think well of him; and, apologizing to his guests, he left the hall, in order to make such arrangements for their entertainment as circumstances admitted.

Upon consulting with old Mysie, the accommodations for the night were easily completed, as indeed they admitted of little choice. The Master surrendered his apartment for the use of Miss Ashton, and Mysie, (once a person of consequence) dressed in a black sattin gown



which had belonged of yore to the Master's grandmother, and had figured in the court-balls of Henrietta Maria, went to attend her as lady's-maid. He next enquired after Bucklaw, and understanding he was at the Change-house with the huntsmen and some companions, he desired Caleb to call there and acquaint him how he was circumstanced at Wolf's Crag — to intimate to him it would be most convenient if he could find a bed in the hamlet, as the elder guest must necessarily be quartered in the secret chamber, the only spare bed-room which could be made fit to receive him. The Master saw no hardship in passing the night by the hall fire, wrapt in his campaign-cloak; and to Scottish domestics of the day, even of the highest rank, nay, to young men of family or fashion, on any pinch, clean straw, or a dry hay-loft, was always held good night-quarters.

For the rest, Lockhard had his master's orders to bring some venison from the inn, and Caleb was to trust to his wits for the honour of the family. The Master, indeed, a second time held out his purse; but, as it was in sight of the strange servant, the Butler thought himself obliged to decline what his fingers itched to clutch. „Couldna he hae slippit it gently into my hand?“ said Caleb — „but his honour will never learn how to bear himsel in siccan cases.“



Mysie, in the meantime, according to a uniform custom in remote places in Scotland, offered the strangers the produce of her little dairy, "while better meat was getting ready." And according to another custom, not yet wholly in desuetude, as the storm was now drifting off to leeward, the Master carried the keeper to the top of his highest tower to admire a wide and waste extent of view, and to "weary for his dinner."

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CHAPTER XII.

*«Now dame," quoth he, «Je vous dis sans
doute,*

*Had I nought of a capon but the liver,
And of your white bread nought but a shiver,
And after that a roasted pigge's head,
(But I ne wold for me no beast were dead)
Then had I with you homely sufferance.»*

Chaucer,

Sumner's Tale.

It was not without some secret misgivings that Caleb set out upon his exploratory expedition. In fact, it was attended with a treble difficulty. He dared not tell his master the offence which he had that morning given to Bucklaw, (just for the honour of the family,) — he dared not acknowledge he had been too hasty in refusing the purse — and, thirdly, he was somewhat apprehensive of unpleasant consequences upon

his meeting Hayston under the impression of an affront, and probably by this time under the influence also of no small quantity of brandy.

Caleb, to do him justice, was as bold as any lion where the honour of the family of Ravenswood was concerned, but his was that considerate valour which does not delight in unnecessary risks. This, however, was a secondary consideration; the main point was to veil the indigence of the housekeeping at the Castle, and to make good his vaunt of the cheer which his resources could procure, without Lockhard's assistance, and without supplies from his master. This was as prime a point of honour with him, as with the generous elephant with whom we have already compared him, who, being over-tasked, broke his skull through the desperate exertions which he made to discharge his duty, when he perceived they were bringing up another to his assistance.

The village which they now approached had frequently afforded the distressed Butler resources upon similar emergencies; but his relations with it had been of late much altered.

It was a little hamlet which straggled along the side of a creek formed by the discharge of a small brook into the sea, and was hidden from the castle, to which it had been in former times an appendage, by the intervention of the

shoulder of a hill forming a projecting headland. It was called Wolf's-hope, (i. e. Wolf's Haven) and the few inhabitants gained a precarious subsistence by manning two or three fishing boats in the herring season, and smuggling gin and brandy during the winter months. They paid a kind of hereditary respect to the lords of Ravenswood; but, in the difficulties of the family, most of the inhabitants of Wolf's-hope had contrived to get feu-rights to their little possessions, their huts, kail-yards, and rights of common, so that they were emancipated from the chains of feudal dependence, and free from the various exactions with which, under every possible pretext, or without pretext at all, the Scottish landlords of the period, themselves in great poverty, were wont to harass their still poorer tenants at will. They might be, on the whole, termed independent, a circumstance peculiarly galling to Caleb, who had been wont to exercise over them the same sweeping authority in levying contributions which was exercised in former times in England, when "the royal purveyors, sallying forth from under the Gothic portcullis to purchase provisions with power and prerogative, instead of money, brought home the plunder of an hundred markets, and all that could be seized from a flying and bid-

ing country, and deposited their spoil in an hundred caverns." *

Caleb loved the memory and resented the downfall of that authority, which mimicked, on a petty scale, the grand contributions exacted by the feudal sovereigns. And as he fondly flattered himself that the awful rule and right supremacy which assigned to the Barons of Ravenswood the first and most effective interest in all productions of nature within five miles of their castle, only slumbered and was not departed for ever, he used every now and then to give the recollection of the inhabitants a little jog by some petty exaction. These were at first submitted to, with more or less readiness, by the inhabitants of the hamlet; for they had been so long used to consider the wants of the Baron and his family as having a title to be preferred to their own, that their actual independence did not convey to them an immediate sense of freedom. They resembled a man that has been long fettered, who, even at liberty, feels, in imagination, the grasp of the handcuffs still binding his wrists. But the exercise of freedom is quickly followed with the natural

* Burke's Speech on Economical Reform. — Works, vol. iii. p. 250.

consciousness of its immunities, as the enlarged prisoner, by the free use of his limbs, soon dispels the cramped feeling they had acquired when bound.

The inhabitants of Wolf's-hope began to grumble, to resist, and at length positively to refuse compliance with the exactions of Caleb Balderstone. It was in vain he reminded them, that when the eleventh Lord Ravenswood, called the Skipper, from his delight in naval matters, had encouraged the trade of their port by building the pier, (a bulwark of stones rudely piled together), which protected the fishing-boats from the weather, it had been matter of understanding, that he was to have the first stone of butter after the calving of every cow within the barony, and the first egg, thence called the Monday's egg, laid by every hen on every Monday in the year.

The feuars heard and scratched their heads, coughed, sneezed, and being pressed for answer, rejoined with one voice, "they could not say;" — the universal refuge of a Scottish peasant, when pressed to admit a claim which his conscience owns, and his interest inclines him to deny.

Caleb, however, furnished the notables of Wolf's-hope with a note of the requisition of butter and eggs, which he claimed as arrears

of the aforesaid subsidy, or kindly aid, payable as above mentioned; and having intimated that he would not be averse to compound the same for goods or money, if it was inconvenient to them to pay in kind, left them, as he hoped, to debate the mode of assessing themselves for that purpose. On the contrary, they met with a determined purpose of resisting the exaction, and were only undecided as to the mode of grounding their opposition, when the cooper, a very important person on a fishing station, and one of the Conscript Fathers of the village, observed, „That their hens had cackled mony a day for the Lords of Ravenswood, and it was time they suld cackle for those that gave them roosts and barley.” An unanimous grin intimated the assent of the assembly. „And,” continued the orator, „if it’s your wull, I’ll just tak a step as far as Dunse for Davie Dingwall the writer, that’s come frae the North to settle amang us, and he’ll pit this job to rights, I’s warrant him.”

A day was accordingly fixed for holding a grand *palaver* at WOLF’S-HOPE on the subject of Caleb’s requisitions, and he was invited to attend at the hamlet for that purpose.

He went with open hands and empty stomach, trusting to fill the one on his master’s account, and the other on his own score, at the expence

of the feuars of Wolf's-hope. But, death to his hopes! as he entered the eastern end of the straggling village, the awful form of Davie Dingwall, a sly, dry, hard-fisted, shrewd country attorney, who had already acted against the family of Ravenswood, and was a principal agent of Sir William Ashton, trotted in at the western extremity, bestriding a leathern portmanteau stuffed with the feu-charters of the hamlet, and hoping he had not kept Mr Balderstone waiting, "as he was instructed and fully empowered to pay or receive, compound or compensate, and, in fine, to *ag  * as accords, respecting all mutual and unsettled claims whatsoever, belonging or competent to the Honourable Norman Ravenswood, commonly called the Master of Ravenswood" — —

"The *Right* Honourable Norman *Lord* Ravenswood," said Caleb with great emphasis; for, though conscious he had little chance of advantage in the conflict to ensue, he was resolved not to sacrifice one jot of honour.

"Lord Ravenswood then," said the man of business; "we shall not quarrel with you about titles of courtesy — commonly called Lord Ravenswood, or Master of Ravenswood, heritable proprietor of the lands and barony of Wolf's Crag, on the one part, and to John Whitefish

and others, feuars in the town of Wolf's-hope, within the barony aforesaid, on the other part."

Caleb was conscious from sad experience, that he would wage a very different strife with this mercenary champion, than with the individual feuars themselves, upon whose old recollections, predilections, and habits of thinking, he might have wrought by an hundred indirect arguments, to which their deputy-representative was totally insensible. The issue of the debate proved the reality of his apprehensions. It was in vain he strained his eloquence and ingenuity, and collected into one mass all arguments arising from antique custom and hereditary respect, from the good deeds done by the Lords of Ravenswood to the community of Wolf's-hope in former days, and from what might be expected from them in future. The Writer stuck to the contents of his feu-charters — he could not see it — 'twas not in the bond. And when Caleb, determined to try what a little spirit would do, deprecated the consequences of Lord Ravenswood withdrawing his protection from the burgh, and even hinted at his using active measures of resentment, the man of law sneered in his face.

"His clients," he said, "had determined to do the best they could for their own town, and he thought Lord Ravenswood, since he was a

lord, might have enough to do to look after his own castle. As to any threats of stouthrief oppression by rule of thumb, or *via facti*, as the law termed it, he would have Mr Balderstone recollect, that new times were not as old times — that they lived ou the south of the Forth, and far from the Hielands — that his clients thought they were able to protect themselves; but should they find themselves mistaken, they would apply to the government for the protection of a corporal and four red-coats, who,” said Mr Dingwall, “would be perfectly able to secure them against Lord Ravenswood, and all that he or his followers could do by the strong hand.”

If Caleb could have concentrated all the lightnings of aristocracy in his eye, to have struck dead this contemner of allegiance and privilege, he would have launched them at his head, without respect to the consequences. As it was, he was compelled to turn his course backward to the castle; and there he remained for full half a day invisible and inaccessible even to Mysie, sequestered in his own peculiar dungeon, where he sat burnishing a single pewterplate, and whistling Maggy Lauder six hours without intermission.

The issue of this unfortunate requisition had shut against Caleb all resources which could be

derived from Wolf's-hope and its purlieus, the El Dorado, or Peru, from which, in all former cases of exigence, he had been able to extract some assistance. He had, indeed, in a manner vowed that the de'il should have him, if ever he put the print of his foot within its causeway again. He had hitherto kept his word; and, strange to tell, this secession had, as he intended, in some degree the effect of a punishment upon the refractory feuars. Mr Balderstone had been a person in their eyes connected with a superior order of beings, whose presence used to grace their little festivities, whose advice they found useful on many occasions, and whose communications gave a sort of credit to their village. The place, they acknowledged, «didna look as it used to do, and should do, since Mr Caleb keepit the castle sae closely — but doubtless, touching the eggs and butter, it was a most unreasonable demand, as Mr Dingwall had justly made manifest.»

Thus stood matters betwixt the parties, when the old Butler, though it was gall and wormwood to him, found himself obliged either to acknowledge before a strange man of quality, and, what was much worse, before that stranger's servant, the total inability of Wolf's Crag to produce a dinner, or he must trust to the compassion of the feuars of Wolf's-hope. It

was a dreadful degradation, but necessity was equally imperious and lawless. With these feelings he entered the street of the village.

Willing to shake himself from his companion as soon as possible, he directed Mr Lockhard to Luckie Sma'trash's changehouse, where a din, proceeding from the revels of Bucklaw, Craigen-gelt, and their party, sounded half-way down the street, while the red glare from the window overpowered the grey twilight which was now settling down, and glimmered against a parcel of old tubs, kegs, and barrels, piled up in the cooper's yard, on the other side of the way.

"If you, Mr Lockhard," said the old Butler to his companion, "will be pleased to step to the change-house where that light comes from, and where, as I judge, they are now singing, 'Cauld Kail in Aberdeen,' ye may do your master's errand about the venison, and I will do mine about Bucklaw's bed, as I return frae getting the rest of the viviers. — It's no that the venison is actually needfu," he added, detaining his colleague by the button, "to make up the dinner; but, as a compliment to the hunters, ye ken — and, Mr Lockhard — if they offer ye a drink o' yill, or a cup o' wine, or a glass o' brandy, ye'll be a wise man to tak it, in case the thunner should hae soured ours at the castle, — whilk is ower muckle to be dreaded."

He then permitted Lockhard to depart; and with foot heavy as lead, and yet far lighter than his heart, stepped on through the unequal street of the straggling village, meditating on whom he ought to make his first attack. It was necessary he should find some one, with whom old acknowledged greatness should weigh more than recent independence, and to whom his application might appear an act of high dignity, relenting at once and soothing. But he could not recollect an inhabitant of a mind so constructed. „Our kail is like to be cauld eneugh too,” he reflected, as the chorus of Cauld Kail in Aberdeen again reached his ears. The minister — he had got his presentation from the late lord, but they had quarrelled about tiends — the brewster’s wife — she had trusted long — and the bill was aye scored up — and unless the dignity of the family should actually require it, it would be a sin to distress a widow woman. None was so able — but, on the other hand, none was likely to be less willing to stand his friend upon the present occasion, than Gibbie Girder, the man of tubs and barrels already mentioned, who had headed the insurrection in the matter of the egg and butter subsidy. — „But a’ comes o’ taking folk on the right side, I trow,” quoth Caleb to himself; „and I had ance the ill hap to say he was but a Johnie Newcome in our

town, and the carle bore the family an ill-will ever since. But he married a bonnie young quean, Jean Lightbody, auld Lightbody's daughter, him that was in the steading of Loup-the-Dyke, — that was married himsel to Marion, that was about my lady in the family forty years syne — I hae had mony a day's daffing wi' Jean's mither, and they say she bides on wi' them — the carle has Jacobuses and Georgiuses baith, an' ane could get at them — and sure I am, it's doing him an honour him or his never deserved at our hand, the ungracious sumph; and if he loses by us a' thegither, he is e'en cheap o't, he can spare it brawly."

Shaking off irresolution, therefore, and turning at once upon his heel, Caleb walked hastily back to the cooper's house, lifted the latch without ceremony, and, in a moment, found himself behind the *hallan*, or partition, from which position he could, himself unseen, reconnoitre the interior of the *but*, or kitchen apartment, of the mansion.

Reverse of the sad menage at the Castle of Wolf's Crag, a bickering fire roared up the cooper's chimney. His wife on the one side, in her pearlins and pudding sleeves, put the last finishing touch to her holiday's apparel, while she contemplated a very handsome and good-humoured face in a broken mirror, raised upon the

bink (the shelves on which the plates are disposed,) for her special accommodation. Her mother, old Luckie Loup-the-Dyke, «a canty carline» as was within twenty miles of her, according to the unanimous report of the *cummers*, or gossips, sat by the fire in the full glory of a grogram gown, lammer beads, and a clean cockernony, whiffing a snug pipe of tobacco, and superintending the affairs of the kitchen. For — sight more interesting to the anxious heart and craving entrails of the desponding Seneschal, than either buxom dame or canny cummer, — there bubbled on the aforesaid bickering fire, a huge pot, or rather cauldron, steaming with beef and brewis; while before it revolved two spits, turned each by one of the cooper's apprentices, seated in the opposite corners of the chimney; the one loaded with a quarter of mutton, while the other was graced with a fat goose and a brace of wild ducks. The sight and scent of such a land of plenty almost wholly overcame the drooping spirits of Caleb. He turned, for a moment's space, to reconnoitre the *ben*, or parlour end of the house, and there saw a sight scarce less affecting to his feelings; — a large round table, covered for ten or twelve persons, *decored* (according to his own favourite term,) with *napery* as white as snow; grand flagons of pewter, intermixed

with one or two silver cups, containing, as was probable, something worthy the brilliancy of their outward appearance; clean trenchers, cutty spoons, knives and forks, sharp, burnished, and prompt for action, which lay all displayed as for an especial festival.

“The deil’s in the pedling tub-coopering carle,” thought Caleb, in all the envy of astonishment; “it’s a shame to see the like o’ them gusting their gabs at sic a rate. But if some o’ that good cheer does not find it’s way to Wolf’s Crag this night, my name is not Caleb Balderstone.”

So resolving, he entered the apartment, and, in all courteous greeting, saluted both the mother and the daughter. Wolf’s Crag was the court of the barony, Caleb prime minister at Wolf’s Crag; and it has ever been remarked, that though the masculine subject who pays the taxes, sometimes growls at the courtiers by whom they are imposed, the said courtiers continue, nevertheless, welcome to the fair sex, to whom they furnish the newest small-talk and the earliest fashions. Both the dames were, therefore, at once about old Caleb’s neck, setting up their throats together by way of welcome.

“Aye, sirs, Mr Balderstone, and is this you? — A sight of you is gude for sair een. — Sit down — sit down — the gudeman will be blythe to see you — ye nar saw him sae cadgy in your

life; but we are to christen our bit wean the night, as ye will hae heard, and doubtless ye will stay and see the ordinance. — We hae killed a wether, and ane o' our lads has been out wi' his gun at the moss — ye used to like wild-fowl."

"Na — na — gudewife," said Caleb, "I just keekit in to wish ye joy, and I wad be glad to hae spoken wi' the gudeman, but ——" moving, as if to go away.

"The ne'er a fit ye's gang," said the elder dame, laughing and holding him fast, with a freedom which belonged to their old acquaintance; "wha kens what ill it may bring to the bairn, if ye overlook it in that gate?"

"But I'm in a preceese hurry, gudewife," said the Butler, suffering himself to be dragged to a seat without much resistance; "and as to eating" — for he observed the mistress of the dwelling bustling about to place a trencher for him — "as for eating — lack-a-day, we are just killed up yonder wi' eating frae morning to night — it's shamefu' epicurism; but that's what we hae gotten frae the English pock-puddings."

"Hout — never mind the English pockpuddings," said Luckie Lightbody; "try our puddings, Mr Balderstone — there is black pudding and white-hass — try whilk ye like best."

"Baith gude — baith excellent — canna be

better; but the very smell is eneugh for me that hae dined sae lately (the faithful wretch had fasted since day-break.) But I wadna affront your housewifeskep, gudewife; and, wi' your permission, I'se e'en pit them in my napkin, and eat them to my supper at e'en, for I am wearied of Mysie's pastry and nonsense — ye ken landward dainties aye pleased me best, Marion — and landward lasses too — (looking at the cooper's wife) — Ne'er a bit but she looks far better than when she married Gilbert, and then she was the bonniest lass in our parochine and the neest till't. — But gawsie cow, goodly calf."

The women smiled at the compliment each to herself, and they smiled again to each other as Caleb wrapt up the puddings in a towel which he had brought with him, as a dragoon carries his foraging bag to receive what may fall in his way.

"And what news at the Castle?" quo' the gudewife.

"News? — the bravest news ye ever heard — the Lord Keeper's up yonder wi' his fair daughter, just ready to fling her at my lord's head, if he winna tak her out o' his arms; and I'se warrant he'll stitch our auld lands of Ravenswood to her petticoat tail."

“Eh! sirs — aye! — and will he hae her? — and is she weel-favoured? — and what’s the colour o’ her hair? — and does she wear a habit or a raily?” were the questions which the females showered upon the Butler.

“Hout tout! — it wad tak a man a day to answer a’ your questions, and I hae hardly a minute. Whare’s the gude-man?”

“Awa’ to fetch the minister,” said Mrs Girder, “precious Mr Peter Bide-the-bent frae the Mos-shead — the honest man has the rheumatism wi’ lying in the hills in the persecution.”

“Aye! — a whig and a mountain-man — nae less,” said Caleb, with a peevishness he could not suppress; “I hae seen the day, Luckie, when worthy Mr Cuffcushion and the service-book would hae served your turn (to the elder dame,) or ony honest woman in like circumstances.”

“And that’s true too,” said Mrs Lightbody, “but what can a body do? — Jean maun baith sing her psalms and busk her cockermoney the gate the gudeman likes, and nae ither gate, for he’s maister and mair at hame, I can tell ye, Mr Balderstone.”

“Aye, and does he guide the gear too?” said Caleb, to whose projects masculine rule boded little good.

“Ilka penny on’t — but he’ll dress her as dink as a daisy, as ye see — sae she has little reason to complain — where there’s ane better aff there’s ten waur.”

“Aweel, gudewife,” said Caleb, crestfallen, but not beaten off, “that wasna the way ye guided your gudeman; but ilka land has it’s ain lauch. I maun be ganging — I just wanted to round in the gudeman’s lug, that I heard them say up bye yonder, that Peter Puncheon that was cooper to the Queen’s stores at the Timmer Burse at Laith, is dead — sae I thought that maybe a word frae my lord to the Lord Keeper might hae served Gilbert; but since he’s frae hame” —

“O but ye maun stay his hame-coming,” said the dame — “I aye telled the gudeman ye meant weel to him; but he taks the tout at every bit lippening word.”

“Aweel, I’ll stay the last minute I can.”

“And so,” said the handsome young spouse of Mr Girder, “ye think this Miss Ashton is weel-favoured — troth, and sae should she, to set up for our young lord, with a face, and a hand, and a seat on his horse, that might become a king’s son — d’ye ken that he aye glowers up at my window, Mr Balderstone, when he chaunces to ride thro’ the town, sae I hae a

right to ken what like he is, as weel as ony body."

"I ken that brawly," said Caleb, "for I have heard his lordship say the cooper's wife had the blackest e'e in the barony; and I said, Weel may that be, my lord, for it was her mither's afore her, as I ken to my cost — Eh, Marion? Ha, ha, ha! — Ah! these were merry days!"

"Hout awa, auld carle," said the old dame, "to speak sic daffing to young folk. — But, Jean — fie, woman, dinna ye hear the bairn greet? I'se warrant it's that dreary weid has come ower't again."

Up got mother and grandmother, and scoured away, jostling each other as they ran, into some remote corner of the tenement, where the young hero of the evening was deposited. When Caleb saw the coast fairly clear, he took an invigorating pinch of snuff, to sharpen and confirm his resolution.

"Could be my cast," thought he, "if either Bide-the-bent or Girder taste that broche of wild-fowl this evening;" and then addressing the eldest turnspit, a boy of about eleven years old, and putting a penny into his hand, he said, "Here is twal pennies *), my man; carry that

*) Monetae Scoticae scilicet.

ower to Mrs Sma'trash, and bid her fill my mill wi' snishing, and I'll turn the broche for ye in the meantime — and she will gi'e ye a ginge-bread snap for your pains."

No sooner was the elder boy departed on this mission, than Caleb, looking the remaining turnspit gravely and steadily in the face, removed from the fire the spit bearing the wild-fowl of which he had undertaken the charge, clapped his hat on his head, and fairly marched off with it. He stopped at the door of the Change-house only to say, in a few brief words, that Mr Hays-ton of Bucklaw was not to expect a bed that evening in the castle.

If this message was too briefly delivered by Caleb, it became absolute rudeness when conveyed through the medium of a suburb landlady; and Bucklaw was, as a more calm and temperate man might have been, highly incensed. Captain Craigengelt proposed, with the unanimous applause of all present, that they should course the old fox (meaning Caleb) ere he got to cover, and toss him in a blanket. But Lockhard intimated to his master's servants, and those of Lord Bittlebrain, in a tone of authority, that the slightest impertinence to the Master of Ravenswood's domestic would give Sir William Ashton the highest offence. And having so said, in a manner sufficient to prevent any aggression on

their part, he left the public-house, taking along with him two servants loaded with such provisions as he had been able to procure, and overtook Caleb just when he had cleared the village.

CHAPTER XIII.

*Should I take aught of you? — 'tis true I
 begged now;
 And what is worse than that, I stole a kind-
 ness;
 And, what is worst of all, I lost my way
 in't.*

Wit without Money.

THE face of the little boy, sole witness of Caleb's infringement upon the laws at once of property and hospitality, would have made a good picture. He sat motionless, as if he had witnessed some of the spectral appearances which he had heard told of in a winter's evening; and as he forgot his own duty, and allowed his spit to stand still, he added to the misfortunes of the evening, by suffering the mutton to burn as black as a coal. He was first recalled from his trance of astonishment by a hearty cuff,

administered by Dame Lightbody, who (in whatever other respects she might conform to her name) was a woman strong of person, and expert in the use of her hands, as some say her deceased husband had known to his cost.

“What gar’d ye let the roast burn, ye ill-cleckit gude-for-nought?”

“I dinna ken,” said the boy.

“And where’s that ill-deedy gett, Giles?”

“I dinna ken,” blubbered the astonished declarant.

“And where’s Mr Balderstone? — and abune a’, and in the name of council and kirk-session, that I suld say sae, where is the broche wi’ the wild-fowl?”

As Mrs Girder here entered, and joined her mother’s exclamations, screaming into one ear while the old lady deafened the other, they succeeded in so utterly confounding the unhappy urchin, that he could not for some time tell his story at all, and it was only when the elder boy returned that the truth began to dawn on their minds.

“Weel, sirs!” said Mrs Lightbody, “wha wad hae thought o’ Caleb Balderstone playing an auld acquaintance sic a pliskie!”

“O, weary on him!” said the spouse of Mr Girder; “and what am I to say to the gudeman?”

— he'll brain me, if there wasna anither woman in a' Wolf's - hope."

"Hout tout, silly quean," said the mother; "na, na — it's come to muckle, but it's no come to that neither; for an he brain you he maun brain me, and I have gar'd his betters stand back — hands aff is fair play — we maunna heed a bit flyting."

The tramp of horses now announced the arrival of the cooper, with the minister. They had no sooner dismounted than they made for the kitchen fire, for the evening was cool after the thunder-storm, and the woods wet and dirty. The young gudewife, strong in the charms of her Sunday gown and biggonets, threw herself in the way of receiving the first attack, while her mother, like the veteran division of the Roman legion, remained in the rear, ready to support her in case of necessity. Both hoped to protract the discovery of what had happened — the mother by interposing her bustling person betwixt Mr Girder and the fire, and the daughter by the extreme cordiality with which she received the minister and her husband, and the anxious fears which she expressed lest they should have "gotten cauld."

"Cauld?" quoth the husband surlily, for he was not of that class of lords and masters whose wives are viceroys over them — "we'll be cauld

aneugh, I think, if ye dinna let us in to the fire."

And so saying, he burst his way through both lines of defence; and, as he had a careful eye over his property of every kind, he perceived at one glance the absence of the spit with its savoury burthen. "What the de'il, woman" —

"Fye for shame!" exclaimed both the women; "and before Mr Bide-the-bent!"

"I stand reproved," said the cooper, "but" —

"The taking in our mouths the name of the great enemy of our souls," said Mr Bide-the-bent —

"I stand reproved," said the cooper.

"Is an exposing ourselves to his temptations, and an inviting; or, in some sort, a compelling, of him to lay aside his other trafficking with unhappy persons, and wait upon those in whose speech his name is frequent."

"Weel, weel, Mr Bide-the-bent, can a man do mair than stand reproved?" said the cooper; "but just let me ask the women what for they hae dished the wild-fowl before we came."

"They arena dished, Gilbert," said his wife; "but — but an accident" —

"What accident?" said Girder, with flashing eyes — "Naeill come ower them, I trust? Uh?"

His wife, who stood much in awe of him, durst not reply, but her mother bustled up to

her support. — “I gied them to an acquaintance of mine, Gibbie Girder; and what about it now?”

Her excess of assurance struck Girder mute for an instant. — “And *ye* gied the wild-fowl, the best end of our christening dinner, to a friend of yours, ye auld rudas! And what was his name, I pray ye?”

“Worthy Mr Caleb Balderstone, frae Wolf’s Crag,” answered Marion, quite prepared for battle.

Girder’s wrath foamed over all restraint. If there was a circumstance which could have added to the resentment he felt, it was that this extravagant donation had been made in favour of our friend Caleb, towards whom, for reasons to which the reader is no stranger, he nourished a decided resentment. He raised his riding wand against the elder matron, but she stood firm, collected in herself, and undauntedly brandished the iron ladle with which she had just been *flaming* (*anglice*, basting) the roast of mutton. Her weapon was certainly the better, and her arm not the weakest of the two; so that Gilbert thought it safest to turn short off upon his wife, who had by this time hatched a sort of hysterical whine, which greatly moved the minister, who was in fact as simple and kind hearted a creature as ever breathed. — “And you, ye thowless jadd, to sit still and see my substance

disponed upon to an idle, drucken, reprobate, worm-eaten serving-man, just because he kittles the lugs o' a silly auld wife wi' useless clavers, and every twa words a lie? — I'll gar you as gude" —

Here the minister interposed, both by voice and action, while Dame Lightbody threw herself in front of her daughter, and flourished her ladle.

"Am I no to chastise my ain wife?" said the cooper, very indignantly.

"Ye may chastise your ain wife if ye like," answered Dame Lightbody; "but ye shall never lay finger on my daughter, and that ye may found upon."

"For shame, Mr Girder," said the clergyman; "this is what I little expected to have seen of you, that ye suld give rein to your sinful passions against your nearest and your dearest; and this night too, when ye are called to the most solemn duty of a Christian parent — and a' for what? for a redundancy of creature comfort, as worthless as they are unneedful."

"Worthless!" exclaimed the cooper — "a better guse never walkit on stubble; twa finer dentier wild-ducks never wat a feather."

"Be it sae, neighbour," rejoined the minister; "but see what superfluities are yet revolving before your fire. I have seen the day when ten

of the bannocks that stand upon that board would have been an acceptable dainty to as many men, that were starving on hills and bogs, and caves of the earth, for the Gospel's sake."

"And that's what vexes me maist of a'," said the cooper, anxious to get some one to sympathise with his not altogether causeless anger; "an the quean had gi'en it to ony suffering sant, or to ony body ava but that reaving, lying, oppressing tory villain, that rade in the wicked troop of militia when it was commanded out against Argyle by the auld tyrant Allan Ravenswood, that is gane to his place, I wad the less hae minded it. But to gie the principal part o' the feast to the like o' him!" —

"Aweel, Gilbert," said the minister, "and dinna ye see a high judgment in this? — The seed of the righteous are not seen begging their bread — think of the son of a powerful oppressor being brought to the pass of supporting his household from your fullness."

"And besides," said the wife, "it wasna for Lord Ravenswood neither, an he wad hear but a body speak — it was to help to entertain the Lord Keeper, as they ca' him, that's up yonder at Wolf's Crag."

"Sir William Ashton at Wolf's Crag!" ejaculated the astonished man of hoops and staves.

“And hand and glove wi’ Lord Ravenswood,” added Dame Lightbody,

“Doited idiot! — that auld claverin sneck-drawer wad gar ye trow the moon is made of green cheese. — The Lord Keeper and Ravenswood! they are cat and dog, hare and hound.”

“I tell ye they are man and wife, and gree better than some others,” retorted the mother-in-law; “forbye, Peter Puncheon, that’s cooper to the Queen’s stores, is dead, and the place is to fill, and” —

“Od guide us, wull ye haud your skirling tongues,” said Girder — for we are to remark, that this explanation was given like a catch for two voices, the younger dame taking up, and repeating, in a higher tone, the words as fast as they were uttered by her mother.

“The gudewife says naething but what’s true, maister,” said Girder’s foreman, who had come in during the fray. “I saw the Lord Keeper’s servants drinking and driving ower at Luckie Sma’ttrash’s, ower by yonder.”

“And is their maister up at Wolf’s Crag?” said Girder.

“Ay, troth is he,” replied his man of confidence.

“An friends wi’ Ravenswood?”

“It’s like sae,” answered the foreman, “since he is putting up wi’ him.”

“And Peter Puncheon’s dead?”

“Ay, ay — he has leaked out at last, the auld carle,” said the foreman; “mony a dribble o’ brandy has gaen through him in his day. — But as for the broche and the wild-fowl, the saddle’s no aff your mare yet, maister, and I could follow and bring it back, for Mr Balderstone’s no far aff the town yet.”

“Do sae, Will — and come here — I’ll tell ye what to do when ye overtake him.”

He relieved the females of his presence, and gave Will his private instructions.

“A bonnie-like thing,” said the mother-in-law, “to send the innocent lad after an armed man, when ye ken Mr Balderstone aye wears a rapier.”

“I trust,” said the minister, “ye have reflected weel on what ye have done, lest you should minister cause of strife, of which it is my duty to say, he who affordeth matter is in no manner guiltless.”

“Never fash your beard, Mr Bide-thebent — ane canna get their breath out here between wives and ministers — I ken best how to turn my ain cake. — Jean, serve up the dinner, and nae mair about it.”

Nor did he again allude to the deficiency in the course of the evening.

Meantime, the foreman, mounted on his mas-

ter's steed, and charged with his special orders, pricked swiftly forth in pursuit of the marauder Caleb. That personage, it may be imagined, did not linger by the way. He intermitted even his dearly-beloved chatter, for the purpose of making more haste — only assuring Mr Lockhard that he had made the purveyor's wife give the wild-fowl a few turns before the fire, in case that Mysie, who had been so much alarmed by the thunder, should not have her kitchen-grate in full splendour. Meanwhile, alleging the necessity of being at Wolf's Crag as soon as possible, he pushed on so fast that his companions could scarce keep up with him. He began already to think he was safe from pursuit, having gained the summit of the swelling eminence which divides Wolf's Crag from the village, when he heard the distant tread of a horse, and a voice which shouted at intervals, "Mr Caleb — Mr Balderstone — Mr Caleb Balderstone — hollo — bide a wee!"

Caleb, it may be well believed, was in no hurry to acknowledge the summons. First, he would not hear it, and faced his companions down, that it was the echo of the wind; then he said it was not worth stopping for; and, at length, halting reluctantly, as the figure of the horseman appeared through the shades of the evening, he bent up his whole soul to the task of defend-

ing his prey, threw himself into an attitude of dignity, advanced the spit, which in his grasp "might seem both spear and shield," and firmly resolved to die rather than surrender it.

What was his astonishment, when the cooper's foreman, riding up and addressing him with respect, told him, "his master was sorry he was absent when he came to his dwelling, and grieved that he could not tarry the christening dinner, and that he had ta'en the freedom to send a sma' rundlet of sack, and ane anker of brandy, as he understood there were guests at the castle, and that they were short of preparation."

I have heard somewhere a story of an elderly gentleman, who was pursued by a bear that had gotten loose from its muzzle, until completely exhausted. In a fit of desperation, he faced round upon Bruin and lifted his cane; at the sight of which the instinct of discipline prevailed, and the animal, instead of tearing him to pieces, rose up upon his hind-legs, and instantly began to shuffle a saraband. Not less than the joyful surprise of the senior, who had supposed himself in the extremity of peril from which he was thus unexpectedly relieved, was that of our excellent friend Caleb, when he found the pursuer intended to add to his prize, instead of bereaving him of it. He recovered his latitude, however, instantly, so soon as the foreman,

stooping from his nag, where he sate perched betwixt the two barrels, whispered in his ear, — “If ony thing about Peter Puncheon’s place could be airted their way, John Girder wad mak it better to the Master of Ravenswood than a pair of new gloves; and that he wad be blythe to speak wi’ Master Balderstone on that head, and he wad find him as pliant as a hoop-willow in a’ that he could wish of him.”

Caleb heard all this without rendering any answer, except that of all great men from Louis XIV. downwards, namely, “we will see about it;” and then added aloud, for the edification of Mr Lockhard, — “Your master has acted with becoming civility and attention in forwarding the liquors, and I will not fail to represent it properly to my Lord Ravenswood. And, my lad,” he said, “you may ride on to the castle, and if none of the servants are returned, whilk is to be dreaded, as they make day and night of it when they are out of sight, ye may put them into the porter’s lodge, whilk is on the right hand of the great entry — the porter has got leave to go to see his friends, sae ye will meet no ane to steer ye.”

The foreman, having received his orders, rode on; and having deposited the casks in the deserted and ruinous porter’s lodge, he returned unquestioned by any one. Having thus executed

his master's commission, and doffed his bonnet to Caleb and his company as he repassed them in his way to the village, he returned to have his share of the christening festivity.


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## CHAPTER XIV.

*As, to the Autumn breeze's bugle-sound,  
Various and vague the dry leaves dance their  
round;*

*Or, from the garner-door, on aether borne,  
The chaff flies devious from the winnowd corn;  
So vague, so devious, at the breath of heaven,  
From their fix'd aim are mortal counsels driv'n.*

*Anonymous.*

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**W**E left Caleb Balderstone in the extremity of triumph at the success of his various atchievements for the honour of the house of Ravenswood. When he had mustered and marshalled his dishes of divers kinds, a more royal provision had not been seen in Wolf's Crag, since the funeral feast of its deceased lord. Great was the glory of the serving-man, as he decorated the old oaken table with a clean cloth, and



arranged upon it carbonadoed venison and roasted wild-fowl, with a glance, every now and then, as if to upbraid the incredulity of his master and his guests; and with many a story, more or less true, was Lockhard that evening regaled concerning the ancient grandeur of Wolf's Crag, and the sway of its Barons over the country in their neighbourhood.

“A vassal scarce held a calf or a lamb his ain, till he had first asked if the Lord of Ravenswood was pleased to accept it; and they were obliged to ask the lord's consent before they married in these days, and mony a merry tale they tell about that right as weel as others. And although,” said Caleb, “these times are not like the gude auld times, when authority had its right, yet, true it is, Mr Lockhard, and you yoursell may partly have remarked, that we of the House of Ravenswood do our endeavour in keeping up, by all just and lawful exertion of our baronial authority, that due and fitting connection betwixt superior and vassal, whilk is in some danger of falling into desuetude, owing to the general license and misrule of these present unhappy times.”

“Umph!” said Mr Lockhard; “and if I may enquire, Mr Balderstone, pray do you find your people at the village yonder amenable? for I must needs say, that at Ravenswood Castle, now



pertaining to my master, the Lord Keeper, ye have not left behind ye the most compliant set of tenantry,"

"Ah! but Mr Lockhard," replied Caleb, "ye must consider there has been a change of hands, and the auld lord might expect twa turns frae them, when the new comer canna get ane. A dour and fractious set they were, thae tenants of Ravenswood, and ill to live wi' when they dinna ken their master — and if your master put them mad ance, the whole country will not put them down."

"Troth," said Mr Lockhard, "an such be the case, I think the wisest thing for us a' wad be to hammer up a match between your young lord and our winsome young leddy up bye there; and Sir William might just stitch your auld barony to her gownsleeve, and he wad sune cuittle another out o' somebody else, sic a lang head as he has."

Caleb shook his head. — "I wish," he said, "I wish that may answer, Mr Lockhard. There are auld prophecies about this house I wad like ill to see fulfilled wi' my auld e'en, that hae seen evil aneugh already."

"Pshaw! never mind freits," said his brother butler; "if the young folk liked ane anither, they wad make a winsome couple. But, to say truth, there is a leddy sits in our hall-nook,



maun have her hand in that as weel as in every other job. But there's no harm in drinking to their healths, and I will fill Mrs Mysie a cup of Mr Girder's canary."

While they thus enjoyed themselves in the kitchen, the company in the hall were not less pleasantly engaged. So soon as Ravenswood had determined upon giving the Lord Keeper such hospitality as he had to offer, he deemed it incumbent on him to assume the open and courteous brow of a well-pleased host. It has been often remarked, that when a man commences by acting a character, he frequently ends by adopting it in good earnest. In the course of an hour or two, Ravenswood, to his own surprise, found himself in the situation of one who frankly does his best to entertain welcome and honoured guests. How much of this change in his disposition was to be ascribed to the beauty and simplicity of Miss Ashton, to the readiness with which she accommodated herself to the inconveniences of her situation — how much to the smooth and plausible conversation of the Lord Keeper, remarkably gifted with those words which win the ear, must be left to the reader's ingenuity to conjecture. But Ravenswood was insensible to neither.

The Lord Keeper was a veteran statesman, well acquainted with courts and cabinets, and



intimate with all the various turns of public affairs during the last eventful years of the seventeenth century. He could talk, from his own knowledge, of men and events, in a way which failed not to win attention, and had the peculiar art, while he never said a word which committed himself, at the same time to persuade the hearer that he was speaking without the least shadow of scrupulous caution or reserve. Ravenswood, in spite of his prejudices and real grounds of resentment, felt himself at once amused and instructed in listening to him, while the statesman, whose inward feelings had at first so much impeded his first efforts to make himself known, had now regained all the ease and fluency of a silver-tongued lawyer of the very highest order.

His daughter did not speak much, but she smiled; and what she did say argued a submissive gentleness, and a desire to give pleasure, which, to a proud man like Ravenswood, was more fascinating than the most brilliant wit. Above all, he could not but observe, that, whether from gratitude or from some other motive, he himself, in his deserted and unprovided hall, was as much the object of respectful attention to his guests, as he would have been when surrounded by all the appliances and means of hospitality proper to his high birth. All deficiencies passed unobserved, or, if they did not es-



cape notice, it was to praise the substitutes which Caleb had contrived to supply the want of the usual accommodations. Where a smile was unavoidable, it was a very good-humoured one, and often coupled with some wellturned compliment, to shew how much the guests esteemed the merit of their noble host, how little they thought of the inconveniencies with which they were surrounded. I am not sure whether the pride of being found to outbalance, in virtue of his own personal merit, all the disadvantages of fortune, did not make as favourable an impression upon the haughty heart of the Master of Ravenswood, as the conversation of the father and the beauty of Lucy Ashton.

The hour of repose arrived. The Keeper and his daughter retired to their apartments, which were "decored" more properly than could have been anticipated. In making the necessary arrangements, Mysie had indeed enjoyed the assistance of a gossip who had arrived from the village upon an exploratory expedition, but had been arrested by Caleb, and impressed into the domestic drudgery of the evening. So that, instead of returning home to describe the dress and person of the grand young lady, she found herself compelled to be active in the domestic economy of Wolf's Crag.

According to the custom of the time, the



Master of Ravenswood attended the Lord Keeper to his apartment, followed by Caleb, who placed on the table, with all the ceremonials due to torches of wax, two rudely framed tallow-candles, such as in those days were only used by the peasantry, hooped in paltry clasps of wire, which served for candlesticks. He then disappeared, and presently entered with two earthen flagons, (the china, he said, had been little used since my lady's time,) one filled with canary wine, the other with brandy. The canary sack, unheeding all probabilities of detection, he declared had been twenty years in the cellars of Wolf's Crag; "though it was not for him to speak before their honours; the brandy, — it was weel ken'd liquor, as mild as mead, and as strong as Sampson — it had been in the house ever since the memorable revel, in which auld Mickletob had been slain at the head of the stair by Jamie of Jenklebrae, on account of the honour of the worshipful Lady Muirend, wha was in some sort an ally of the family; natheless" —

"But to cut that matter short, Mr Caleb," said the Keeper, "perhaps you will favour me with a ewer of water."

"God forbid your lordship should drink water in this family, to the disgrace of so honourable an house!"



“Nevertheless, if his lordship have a fancy,” said the Master, smiling, “I think you might indulge him; for, if I mistake not, there has been water drank here at no distant date, and with good relish too.”

“To be sure, if his lordship has a fancy,” said Caleb; and re-entering with a jug of pure element — “He will scarce find such water ony where as is drawn frae the well at Wolf’s Crag — nevertheless” —

“Nevertheless, we must leave the Lord Keeper to his repose in this poor chamber of ours,” said the Master of Ravenswood, interrupting his talkative domestic, who immediately turning to the door-way, with a profound reverence, prepared to usher his master from the secret chamber.

But the Lord Keeper prevented his host’s departure. — “I have but one word to say to the Master of Ravenswood, Mr Caleb, and I fancy he will excuse your waiting.”

With a second reverence, lower than the former, Caleb withdrew — and his master stood motionless, expecting, with considerable embarrassment, what was to close the events of a day fraught with unexpected incidents.

“Master of Ravenswood,” said Sir William Ashton, with some embarrassment, “I hope you understand the Christian law too well to suffer the sun to set upon your anger?”



The Master blushed, and replied, "He had no occasion that evening to exercise the duty enjoined upon him by his Christian faith."

"I should have thought otherwise," said his guest, "considering the various subjects of dispute and litigation which have unhappily occurred more frequently than was desirable or necessary betwixt the late honourable lord, your father, and myself."

"I could wish, my lord," said Ravenswood, agitated by suppressed emotion, "that reference to these circumstances should be made any where rather than under my father's roof."

"I should have felt the delicacy of this appeal at another time," said Sir William Ashton, "but now I must proceed with what I meant to say. — I have suffered too much in my own mind from the false delicacy which prevented my soliciting with earnestness, what indeed I frequently requested, a personal communing with your father — much distress of mind to him and to me might have been prevented."

"It is true," said Ravenswood, after a moment's reflection; "I have heard my father say your lordship had proposed a personal interview."

"Proposed, my dear Master? I did indeed propose it, but I ought to have begged, entreated, beseeched it. I ought to have torn away the veil which interested persons had stretched



betwixt us, and shewn myself as I was, willing to sacrifice a considerable part even of my legal rights in order to conciliate feelings so natural as his must be allowed to have been. Let me say for myself, my young friend, for so I will call you, that had your father and I spent the same time together which my good fortune has allowed me to-day to pass in your company, it is possible the land might yet have enjoyed one of the most respectable of its ancient nobility, and I should have been spared the pain of parting in enmity from a person whose general character I so much admired and honoured."

He put his handkerchief to his eyes. Ravenswood also was moved, but awaited in silence the progress of this extraordinary communication.

"It is necessary," continued the Lord Keeper, "and proper that you should understand, that there have been many points betwixt us, in which, although I judged it proper that there should be an exact ascertainment of my legal rights by the decree of a court of justice, yet it was never my intention to press them beyond the verge of equity."

"My lord," said the Master of Ravenswood, "it is unnecessary to pursue this topic farther. What the law will give you, or has given you, you enjoy — or you shall enjoy; neither my



father, nor I myself, would have received any thing on the footing of favour."

"Favour? — no — you misunderstand me," resumed the Keeper; "or rather you are no lawyer. A right may be good in law, and ascertained to be so, which yet a man of honour may not in every case care to avail himself of."

"I am sorry for it, my lord," said the Master.

"Nay, nay," retorted his guest, "you speak like a young counsellor; your spirit goes before your wit. There are many things still open for decision betwixt us. Can you blame me, an old man desirous of peace, and in the castle of a young nobleman who has saved my daughter's life and my own, that I am desirous, anxiously desirous, that these should be settled on the most liberal principle?"

The old man kept fast hold of the Master's passive hand as he spoke, and made it impossible for him, be his predetermination what it would, to return any other than an acquiescent reply; and wishing his guest good night, he postponed farther conference until the next morning.

Ravenswood hurried into the hall where he was to spend the night, and for a time traversed its pavement with a disordered and rapid pace. His mortal foe was under his roof, yet his sentiments towards him were neither those of a feudal



enemy nor of a true Christian. He felt as if he could neither forgive him in the one character, or follow forth his vengeance in the other, but that he was making a base and dishonourable composition betwixt his resentment against the father and his affection for the daughter. He cursed himself, as he hurried to and fro in the pale moonlight, and more ruddy gleams of the expiring wood fire. He threw open and shut the latticed windows with violence, as if alike impatient of the admission and exclusion of free air. At length, however, the torrent of passion foamed off its madness, and he threw himself into the chair, which he proposed as his place of repose for the night.

“If, in reality,” — such were the calmer thoughts that followed the first tempest of his passion — “If, in reality, this man desires no more than the law allows him — if he is willing to adjust even his acknowledged rights upon an equitable footing, what could be my father’s cause of complaint? — what is mine? — Those from whom we won our ancient possessions fell under the sword of my ancestors, and left lands and livings to the conquerors; we sink under the force of the law, now too powerful for the Scottish chivalry. Let us parley with the victors of the day, as if we had been besieged in our fortress and without hope of relief. This man



may be other than I have thought him; and his daughter — but I have resolved not to think upon her.”

He wrapt his cloak around him, fell asleep, and dreamed of Lucy Ashton till day-light gleamed through the lattices.



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## CHAPTER XV.

*We worldly men, when we see friends and  
kinsmen*

*Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand  
To lift them up, but rather set our feet  
Upon their heads to press them to the bottom,  
As I must yield with you I practised it;  
But now I see you in a way to rise,  
I can and will assist you. —*

*New way to Pay Old Debts.*

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THE Lord Keeper carried with him to a couch, harder than he was accustomed to stretch himself upon, the same ambitious thoughts and political perplexities, which drive sleep from the softest down that ever spread a bed of state. He had sailed long enough amid the contending tides and curenents of the time to be sensible of their peril, and of the necessity of trimming his vessel to the prevailing wind, if he would have her



escape shipwreck in the storm. The nature of his talents, and the timorousness of disposition connected with them, had made him assume the pliability of the versatile old Earl of Northampton, who explained the art by which he kept his ground during all the changes of state, from the reign of Henry VIII. to that of Elizabeth, by the frank avowal, that he was born of the willow, not of the oak. It had accordingly been Sir William Ashton's policy on all occasions to watch the changes in the political horizon, and, ere yet the conflict was decided, to negotiate some interest for himself with the party most likely to prove victorious. His time-serving disposition was well known, and excited the contempt of the more daring leaders of both factions in the state. But his talents were of a useful and practical kind, and his legal knowledge held in high estimation; and they so far counter-balanced other deficiencies, that those in power were glad to use and to reward, though without trusting or respecting him.

The Marquis of A — — had used his utmost influence to effect a change in the Scottish cabinet, and his schemes had been of late so well laid and so ably supported, that there appeared a very great chance of his proving ultimately successful. He did not, however, feel so strong or so confident as to neglect any means of draw-



ing recruits to his standard. The acquisition of the Lord Keeper was deemed of some importance, and a friend, perfectly acquainted with his circumstances and character, became responsible for his political conversion.

When this gentleman arrived at Ravenswood Castle upon a visit, the real purpose of which was disguised under general courtesy, he found the prevailing fear, which at present beset the Lord Keeper, was that of danger to his own person from the Master of Ravenswood. The language which the blind sybil, old Alice, had used; the sudden appearance of the Master armed, and within his precincts, immediately after he had been warned against danger from him; the cold and haughty return received in exchange for the acknowledgments with which he loaded him for his timely protection, had all made a strong impression on his imagination.

So soon as the Marquis's political agent found how the wind sate, he began to insinuate fears and doubts of another kind, scarce less calculated to affect the Lord Keeper. He enquired with seeming interest, whether the proceedings in Sir William's complicated litigation with the Ravenswood family was out of court, and settled without the possibility of appeal? The Lord Keeper answered in the affirmative; but his interrogator was too well informed to be imposed



upon. He pointed out to him, by unanswerable arguments, that some of the most important points which had been decided in his favour against the House of Ravenswood, were liable to be reviewed by the Estates of the Kingdom, *i. e.* by the Scottish Parliament, upon an appeal by the party injured, or, as it was technically termed, «a protestation for remeid in law.»

The Lord Keeper, after he had for some time disputed the legality of such a proceeding, was compelled, at length, to comfort himself with the improbability of the young Master of Ravenswood finding friends in parliament, capable of stirring in so weighty an affair.

«Do not comfort yourself with that false hope,” said his wily friend; «it is possible, that in the next session of parliament, young Ravenswood may find more friends and favour even than your lordship.”

«That would be a sight worth seeing,” said the Keeper scornfully.

«And yet,” said his friend, «such things have been seen ere now, and in our own time. There are many at the head of affairs even now, that a few years ago were under hiding for their lives; and many a man dining on plate of silver, that was fain to eat his crowdy without a bicker; and many a high head has been brought full low among us in as short a space. Scott of Scot-



starvet's 'Staggering State of Scots Statesmen,' of which curious memoir you shewed me a manuscript, has been outstaggered in our time."

The Lord Keeper answered with a deep sigh, "that these mutations were no new sights in Scotland, and had been witnessed long before the time of the satirical author he had quoted. It was many a long year," he said, "since Fordun had quoted, as an ancient proverb, *neque dives, neque fortis, sed nec sapiens Scotus, prae-dominante invidia, diu durabit in terra.*"

"And be assured, my esteemed friend," was the answer, "that even your long services to the state, or deep legal knowledge, will not save you, or render your estate stable, if the Marquis of A — — comes in with a parliament according to his will. You know that the deceased Lord Ravenswood was his near ally, his lady being fifth in descent from the Knight of Til-libardine; and I am well assured that he will take young Ravenswood by the hand, and be his very good lord and kinsman. Why should he not? — he is an active and stirring young fellow, able to help himself with tongue and hands; and it is such as he that find friends among their kindred, and not those unarmed and unable Mephebosheths, that are sure to be a burthen to every one that takes them up. And so, if these Ravenswood cases be called over the coals in



parliament, you will find that the Marquis will have a crow to pluck with you."

"That would be an evil requital," said the Lord Keeper, "for my long services to the state, and the ancient respect in which I have held his lordship's honourable family and person."

"Aye, but," rejoined the agent of the Marquis, "it is in vain to look back on past service and auld respect, my lord — it will be present service and immediate proofs of regard, which, in these sliddery times, will be expected by a man like the Marquis."

The Lord Keeper now saw the full drift of his friend's argument, but he was too cautious to return any positive answer.

"He knew not," he said, "the service which the Lord Marquis could expect from one of his limited abilities, that had not always stood at his command, still saving and reserving his duty to his king and country."

Having thus said nothing, while he seemed to say every thing, for the exception was calculated to cover whatever he might afterwards think proper to bring under it, Sir William Ashton changed the conversation, nor did he again permit it to be introduced. His guest departed, without having brought the wily old statesman the length of committing himself, or of pledging himself to any future line of conduct, but



with the certainty that he had alarmed his fears in a most sensible point, and laid a foundation for future and farther treaty.

When he rendered an account of his negotiation to the Marquis, they both agreed that the Keeper ought not to be permitted to relapse into security, and that he should be plied with new subjects of alarm, especially during the absence of his lady. They were well aware that her proud, vindictive, and predominating spirit, would be likely to supply him with the courage in which he was deficient — that she was immovably attached to the party now in power, with whom she maintained a close correspondence and alliance, and that she hated, without fearing, the Ravenswood family, whose more ancient dignity threw discredit on the newly acquired grandeur of her husband, to such a degree that she would have periled the interest of her own house, to have the prospect of altogether crushing that of her enemy.

But Lady Ashton was now absent. The business which had long detained her in Edinburgh, had afterwards induced her to travel to London, not without the hope that she might contribute her share to disconcert the intrigues of the Marquis at court, for she stood high in favour with the celebrated Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, to whom, in point of character, she



bore considerable resemblance. It was necessary to press her husband hard before her return; and, as a preparatory step, the Marquis wrote to the Master of Ravenswood the letter which we rehearsed in a former chapter. It was cautiously worded, so as to leave it in the power of the writer hereafter to take as deep, or as slight an interest in the fortunes of his kinsman, as the progress of his own schemes might require. But however unwilling, as a statesman, the Marquis might be to commit himself, or assume the character of a patron, while he had nothing to give away, it must be said to his honour, that he felt a strong inclination effectually to befriend the Master of Ravenswood, as well as to use his name as a means of alarming the terrors of the Lord Keeper.

As the messenger who carried this letter was to pass near the house of the Lord Keeper, he had it in direction, that in the village adjoining to the park gate of the castle, his horse should lose a shoe, and that, while it was replaced by the smith of the place, he should express the utmost regret for the necessary loss of time, and in the vehemence of his impatience, give it to be understood, that he was bearing a message from the Marquis of A — — to the Master of Ravenswood, upon a matter of life and death.

This news, with exaggerations, was speedily



carried from various quarters to the ears of the Lord Keeper, and each reporter dwelt upon the extreme impatience of the courier, and the surprising short time in which he had executed his journey. The anxious statesman heard in silence; but in private Lockhard received orders to watch the courier on his return, to way-lay him in the village, to ply him with liquor if possible, and to use all means, fair or foul, to learn the contents of the letter of which he was the bearer. But as this plot had been foreseen, the messenger returned by a different and distant road, and thus escaped the snare that was laid for him.

After he had been in vain expected for some time, Mr Dingwall had orders to make especial enquiry among his clients of Wolf's-hope, whether such a domestic belonging to the Marquis of A — — had actually arrived at the neighbouring castle. This was easily ascertained; for Caleb had been in the village one morning by five o'clock, to borrow "twa chappins of ale and a kipper" for the messenger's refreshment, and the poor fellow had been ill for twenty-four hours at Luckie Sma'trash's, in consequence of dining upon "saut saumon and sour drink." So that the existence of a correspondence betwixt the Marquis and his distressed kinsman, which Sir William Ashton had sometimes treated as



a bug-bear, was proved beyond the possibility of further doubt.

The alarm of the Lord Keeper became very serious. Since the Claim of Right, the power of appealing from the decisions of the civil court to the estates of parliament, which had formerly been held incompetent, had in many instances been claimed, and in some allowed, and he had no small reason to apprehend the issue, if the Scottish parliament should be disposed to act upon the protestation of the Master of Ravenswood "for remeid in law." It would resolve into an equitable claim, and be decided, perhaps, upon the broad principles of justice, which were not quite so favourable to the Lord Keeper as those of strict law. Meanwhile, every report which reached him served to render the success of the Marquis's intrigues the more probable, and the Lord Keeper began to think it indispensable, that he should look round for some kind of protection against the coming storm. The timidity of his temper induced him to adopt measures of compromise and conciliation. The affair of the wild bull, properly managed, might, he thought, be made to facilitate a personal communication and reconciliation betwixt the Master and himself. He would then learn, if possible, what his own ideas were of the extent of his rights, and the means of enforcing them;



and perhaps matters might be brought to a compromise, where one party was wealthy, and the other so very poor. A reconciliation with Ravenswood was likely to give him an opportunity to play his own game with the Marquis of A——. “And besides,” said he to himself, “it will be an act of generosity to raise up the heir of this distressed family; and if he is to be warmly and effectually befriended by the new government, who knows but my virtue may prove its own reward?”

Thus thought Sir William Ashton, covering with no unusual self-delusion his interested views with a hue of virtue; and having attained this point, his fancy strayed still farther. He began to bethink himself, “that if Ravenswood was to have a distinguished place of power and trust — and if such a union would sopite the heavier part of his unadjusted claims — there might be worse matches for his daughter Lucy — the Master might be reponed against the attainder — Lord Ravenswood was an ancient title, and the alliance would, in some measure, legitimate his own possession of the greater part of the Master’s spoils, and make the surrender of the rest a subject of less bitter regret.”

With these mingled and multifarious plans occupying his head, the Lord Keeper availed



himself of my Lord Bittlebrains' repeated invitation to his residence, and thus came within a very few miles of Wolf's Crag. Here he found the lord of the mansion absent, but was courteously received by the lady, who expected her husband's immediate return. She expressed her particular delight at seeing Miss Ashton, and appointed the hounds to be taken out for the Lord Keeper's special amusement. He readily entered into the proposal, as giving him an opportunity to reconnoitre Wolf's Crag, and perhaps to make some acquaintance with the owner, if he should be tempted from his desolate mansion by the chase. Lockhard had his orders to endeavour on his part to make some acquaintance with the inmates of the castle, and we have seen how he played his part.

The accidental storm did more to further the Lord Keeper's plan of forming a personal acquaintance with young Ravenswood, than his most sanguine expectations could have anticipated. His fear of the young nobleman's personal resentment had greatly decreased, since he considered him as formidable from his legal claims, and the means he might have of enforcing them. But although he thought, not unreasonably, that only desperate circumstances drove men on desperate measures, it was not without a secret terror, which shook his heart within him, that



he first felt himself enclosed within the desolate tower of Wolf's Crag; a place so well fitted, from solitude and strength, to be a scene of violence and vengeance. The stern reception at first given to them by the Master of Ravenswood, and the difficulty he felt in explaining to that injured nobleman what guests were under the shelter of his roof, did not sooth these alarms; so that when Sir William Ashton heard the door of the court-yard shut behind him with violence, the words of Alice rung in his ears, "that he had drawn on matters too hardly with so fierce a race as those of Ravenswood, and that they would bide their time to be avenged."

The subsequent frankness of the Master's hospitality, as their acquaintance increased, abated the apprehensions these recollections were calculated to excite; and it did not escape Sir William Ashton, that it was to Lucy's grace and beauty, he owed the change in their host's behaviour.

All these thoughts thronged upon him when he took possession of the secret chamber. The iron lamp, the unfurnished apartment, more resembling a prison than a place of ordinary repose, the hoarse and ceaseless sound of the waves rushing against the base of the rock on



which the castle was founded, saddened and perplexed his mind. To his own successful machinations, the ruin of the family had been in a great measure owing, but his disposition was crafty and not cruel; so that actually to witness the desolation and distress he had himself occasioned, was as painful to him as it would be to the humane mistress of a family to superintend in person the execution of the lambs and poultry which are killed by her own directions. At the same time, when he thought of the alternative, of restoring to Ravenswood a large proportion of his spoils, or of adopting, as an ally and member of his own family, the heir of this impoverished house, he felt as the spider may be supposed to do, when his whole web, the intricacies of which had been planned with so much art, is destroyed by the chance sweep of a broom. And then, if he should commit himself too far in this matter, it gave rise to a perilous question, which many a good husband, when under temptation to act as a free agent, has asked himself without being able to return a satisfactory answer; "What will my wife — what will Lady Ashton say?" On the whole, he came at length to the resolution in which minds of a weaker cast so often take refuge. He resolved to watch



events, to take advantage of circumstances as they occurred, and regulate his conduct accordingly. In this spirit of temporizing policy, he at length composed his mind to rest.



## CHAPTER. XVI.

*"A slight note I have about me for you, for the delivery of which you must excuse me. It is an offer that friendship calls upon me to do, and no way offensive to you, since I desire nothing but right upon both sides."*

*King and no King.*

WHEN Ravenswood and his guest met in the morning, the gloom of the Master's spirit had in part returned. He, also, had passed a night rather of reflection than of slumber; and the feelings which he could not but entertain towards Lucy Ashton, had to support a severe conflict against those which he had so long nourished against her father. To clasp in friendship the hand of the enemy of his house, to entertain him under his roof, to exchange with him the courtesies and the kindness of domestic fa-



miliarity, was a degradation which his proud spirit could not be bent to without a struggle.

But the ice being once broken, the Lord Keeper was resolved it should not have time again to freeze. It had been part of his plan to stun and confuse Ravenswood's ideas, by a complicated and technical statement of the matters which had been in debate betwixt their families, justly thinking it would be difficult for a youth of his age to follow the expositions of a practical lawyer, concerning actions of compt and reckoning, and of multiplepoindings, and adjudication and wadsets, proper and improper, and poindings of the ground and declarations of expiry of the legal. Thus, thought Sir WWilliam, I shall have all the grace of appearing perfectly communicative, while my party will derive very little advantage from any thing I may tell him. He therefore took Ravenswood aside into the deep recess of a window in the hall, and resuming the discourse of the preceding evening, expressed a hope that his young friend would assume some patience, in order to hear him enter into a minute and explanatory detail of those unfortunate circumstances, in which his late honourable father had stood at variance with the Lord Keeper. The Master of Ravenswood coloured highly, but was silent; and the Lord Keeper, though not greatly approving the sudden height





ening of his auditor's complexion, commenced the history of a bond for twenty thousand marks, advanced by his father to the father of Allan Lord Ravenswood, and was proceeding to detail the executorial proceedings by which this large sum had been rendered a *debitum fundi*, when he was interrupted by the Master.

"It is not in this place," he said, "that I can hear Sir William Ashton's explanation of the matters in question between us. It is not here, where my father died of a broken heart, that I can with decency or temper investigate the cause of his distress. I might remember that I was a son, and forget the duties of a host. A time, however, there must come, when these things shall be discussed in a place and in a presence where both of us will have equal freedom to speak and to hear."

"Any time," the Lord Keeper said, "any place was alike to those who sought nothing but justice. Yet it would seem he was, in fairness, entitled to some premonition respecting the grounds upon which the Master proposed to impugn the whole train of legal proceedings, which had been so well and ripely advised in the only courts competent."

"Sir William Ashton," answered the Master with warmth, "the lands which you now occupy were granted to my remote ancestor for services



done with his sword against the English invaders. How they have glided from us by a train of proceedings that seem to be neither sale, nor mortgage, nor adjudication for debt, but a non-descript and entangled mixture of all these rights — how annual-rent has been accumulated upon principal, and no nook or coign of legal advantage left unoccupied, until our interest in our hereditary property seems to have melted away like an icicle in thaw — all this you understand better than I do. I am willing, however, to suppose, from the frankness of your conduct towards me, that I may in a great measure have mistaken your character, and that things may have appeared right and fitting to you, a skilful and practised lawyer, which to my ignorant understanding seem very little short of injustice and gross oppression.”

“And you, my dear Master,” answered Sir William, “you, permit me to say, have been equally misrepresented to me. I was taught to believe you a fierce, imperious, hot-headed youth, ready, at the slightest provocation, to throw your sword into the scales of justice, and to appeal to those rude and forcible measures from which civil polity has long protected the people of Scotland. Then, since we were mutually mistaken in each other, why should not the young nobleman be willing to listen to the old lawyer,



while, at least, he explains the points of difference betwixt them?"

"No, my lord," answered Ravenswood; "it is in the Estates of the nation, in the supreme Court of Parliament, that we must parley together. The belted lords and knights of Scotland, her ancient peers and baronage, must decide, if it is their will that a house, not the least noble of their members, shall be stripped of their possessions, the reward of the patriotism of generations, as the pawn of a wretched mechanic becomes forfeit to the usurer the instant the hour of redemption has passed away. If they yield to the grasping severity of the creditor, and to the gnawing usury that eats into our lands as moths into raiment, it will be of more evil consequence to them and their posterity than to Norman Ravenswood — I shall still have my sword and my cloak, and can follow the profession of arms wherever a trumpet shall sound."

As he pronounced these words, in a firm yet melancholy tone, he raised his eyes, and suddenly encountered those of Lucy Ashton, who had stolen unawares on their interview, and observed her looks fastened on them with an expression of enthusiastic interest and admiration, which had rapt her for the moment beyond the fear of discovery. The noble form and fine features of Ravenswood, fired with the pride of



birth and sense of internal dignity — the mellow and expressive tones of his voice, the desolate state of his fortunes, and the indifference with which he seemed to endure and to dare the worst that might befall, rendered him a dangerous object of contemplation for a maiden already too much disposed to dwell upon recollections connected with him. When their eyes encountered each other, both blushed deeply, conscious of some strong internal emotion, and shunned again to meet each other's look.

Sir William Ashton had, of course, closely watched the expression of their countenances. "I need fear," thought he to himself, "neither Parliament nor protestation; I have an effectual mode of reconciling myself with this hot-tempered young fellow, in case he shall become formidable. The present object is, at all events, to avoid committing ourselves. The hook is fixed; we will not strain the line too soon — it is as well to reserve the privilege of slipping it loose, if we do not find the fish worth landing."

In this selfish and cruel calculation upon the supposed attachment of Ravenswood to Lucy, he was so far from considering the pain he might give to the former, by thus dallying with his affections, that he did not even think upon the risk of involving his own daughter in the perils of an unfortunate passion; as if her predilection,



which could not escape his attention, were like the flame of a taper, which might be lighted or extinguished at pleasure. But Providence had prepared a dreadful requital for this keen observer of human passions, who had spent his life in securing advantages to himself by artfully working upon the passions of others.

Caleb Balderstone now came to announce that breakfast was prepared; for in those days of substantial feeding, the reliques of the supper amply furnished forth the morning meal. Neither did he forget to present to the Lord Keeper, with great reverence, a morning-draught in a large pewter cup, garnished with leaves of parsley and scurvy-grass. He craved pardon, of course, for having omitted to serve it in the great silver standing cup as behoved, being that it was at present in a silversmith's in Edinburgh, for the purpose of being overlaid with gilt.

“In Edinburgh sure enough,” said Ravenswood; “but in what place, or for what purpose, I am afraid neither your nor I know.”

“Aweel!” said Caleb peevishly, “there’s a man standing at the gate already this morning — that’s ae thing that I ken — Does your honour ken whether ye will speak wi’ him or no?”

“Does he wish to speak with me, Caleb?”

“Less will no serve him,” said Caleb; “but ye had best take a visie of him through the wicket



before opening the gate — its no every ane we suld let into this castle."

"What! do you suppose him to be a messenger come to arrest me for debt?" said Ravenswood.

"A messenger arrest your honour for debt, and in your Castle of Wolf's Crag! — Your honour is jeasting wi' auld Caleb this morning." However, he whispered in his ear as he followed him out, "I would be loth to do ony decent man a prejudice in your honour's gude opinion; but I wad take twa looks of that chield before I let him within these walls."

He was not an officer of the law, however; being no less a person than Captain Craigenfelt, with his nose as red as a comfortable cup of brandy could make it, his laced cocked-hat set a little aside upon the top of his black riding periwig, a sword by his side, and pistols at his holsters, and his person arrayed in a riding suit, laid over with tarnished lace, — the very moral of one who would say, Stand, to a true man.

When the Master had recognized him, he ordered the gates to be opened. "I suppose," he said, "Captain Craigenfelt, there are no such weighty matters betwixt you and me, but what may be discussed in this place. I have company in the castle at present, and the terms



upon which we last parted must excuse my asking you to make part of them."

Craigengelt, although possessing the very perfection of impudence, was somewhat abashed by this unfavourable reception. "He had no intention," he said, "to force himself upon the Master of Ravenswood's hospitality — he was in the honourable service of bearing a message to him from a friend, otherwise the Master of Ravenswood should not have had reason to complain of this intrusion."

"Let it be short, sir," said the Master, "for that will be the best apology. Who is the gentleman who is so fortunate as to have your services as a messenger?"

"My friend Mr Hayston of Bucklaw," answered Craigengelt, with conscious importance, and that confidence which the acknowledged courage of his principal inspired, "who conceives himself to have been treated by you with something much short of the respect which he had reason to demand, and therefore is resolved to exact satisfaction. I bring with me," said he, taking a piece of paper out of his pocket, "the precise length of his sword; and he requests you will meet him, accompanied by a friend, and equally armed, at any place within a mile of the castle, when I shall give attendance as umpire or second on his behalf."



“Satisfaction — and equal arms!” repeated Ravenswood, who, the reader will recollect, had no reason to suppose he had given the slightest offence to his late inmate — “upon my word, Captain Craigengelt, either you have invented the most improbable falsehood that ever came into the mind of such a person, or your morning-draught has been somewhat of the strongest. What could persuade Bucklaw to send me such a message?”

“For that, sir,” replied Craigengelt, “I am desired to refer you to what, in duty to my friend, I am to term your inhospitality in excluding him from your house, without reasons assigned.”

“It is impossible,” replied the Master; “he cannot be such a fool as to interpret actual necessity as an insult. Nor do I believe, that, knowing my opinion of you, captain, he would have employed the services of so slight and inconsiderable a person as yourself upon such an errand, as I certainly could expect no man of honour to act with you in the office of umpire.”

“I slight and inconsiderable!” said Craigengelt, raising his voice, and laying his hand on his cutlass; “if it were not that the quarrel of my friend craves the precedence, and is in dependence before my own, I would give you to understand” —



“I can understand nothing upon your explanation, Captain Craigengelt. Be satisfied of that, and oblige me with your departure.”

“D——n!” muttered the bully; “and is this the answer which I am to carry back to an honourable message?”

“Tell the Laird of Bucklaw,” answered Ravenswood, “if you are really sent by him, that when he sends me his cause of grievance by a person fitting to carry such an errand betwixt him and me, I will either explain it or maintain it.”

“Then, Master, you will at least cause to be returned to Hayston, by my hands, his property which is remaining in your possession.”

“Whatever property Bucklaw may have left behind him, sir,” replied the Master, “shall be returned to him by my servant, as you do not shew me any credentials from him which entitle you to receive it.”

“Well, Master,” said Captain Craigengelt, with malice which even his fear of the consequences could not suppress; “you have this morning done me an egregious wrong and dishonour, but far more to yourself. A castle indeed?” he continued, looking around him; “why this is worse than a *coupe-gorge* house, where they receive travellers to plunder them of their property.”



“You insolent rascal,” said the Master, raising his cane, and making a grasp at the captain’s bridle, “if you do not depart without uttering another syllable, I will baton you to death.”

At the motion of the Master towards him, the bully turned so sharply round, that with some difficulty he escaped throwing down his horse, whose hoofs struck fire from the rocky pavement in every direction. Recovering him, however, with the bridle, he pushed for the gate, and rode sharply back again in the direction of the village.

As Ravenswood turned round to leave the court-yard after this dialogue, he found that the Lord Keeper had descended from the hall, and witnessed, though at the distance prescribed by politeness, his interview with Craigengelt.

“I have seen,” said the Lord Keeper, “that gentleman’s face, and at no great distance of time — his name is Craig — Craig — something, is it not?”

“Craigengelt is the fellow’s name,” said the Master, “at least that by which he passes at present.”

“Craig-in-guilt,” said Caleb, punning upon the word *craig*, which in Scotch signifies throat; “if he is Craig-in-guilt just now, he is as likely to be Craig-in-peril as ony chield I ever



saw — the loon has woodie written on his very visnomy, and I wad wager twa and a plack that hemp plaits his cravat yet.”

“You understand physiognomy, good Mr Caleb,” said the Keeper, smiling; „I assure you the gentleman has been near such a consummation before now — for I most distinctly recollect, that, upon occasion of a journey which I made about a fortnight ago to Edinburgh, I saw Mr Craigengelt, or whatever is his name, undergo a severe examination before the Privy Council.”

“Upon what account?” said the Master of Ravenswood, with some interest.

The question led immediately to a tale which the Lord Keeper had been very anxious to introduce, when he could find a graceful and fitting opportunity. He took hold of the Master’s arm, and led him back towards the hall. „The answer to your question,” he said, „though it is a ridiculous business, is only fit for your own ear.”

As they entered the hall, he again took the Master apart into one of the recesses of the window, where it will be easily believed that Miss Ashton did not venture again to intrude upon their conference.

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“Well, Master,” said Captain Craigengelt, with malice which even his fear of the consequences could not suppress; “you have this morning done me an egregious wrong and dishonour, but far more to yourself. A castle indeed?” he continued, looking around him; “why this is worse than a *coupe-gorge* house, where they receive travellers to plunder them of their property.”



“You insolent rascal,” said the Master, raising his cane, and making a grasp at the captain’s bridle, “if you do not depart without uttering another syllable, I will baton you to death.”

At the motion of the Master towards him, the bully turned so sharply round, that with some difficulty he escaped throwing down his horse, whose hoofs struck fire from the rocky pavement in every direction. Recovering him, however, with the bridle, he pushed for the gate, and rode sharply back again in the direction of the village.

As Ravenswood turned round to leave the court-yard after this dialogue, he found that the Lord Keeper had descended from the hall, and witnessed, though at the distance prescribed by politeness, his interview with Craigengelt.

“I have seen,” said the Lord Keeper, “that gentleman’s face, and at no great distance of time — his name is Craig — Craig — something, is it not?”

“Craigengelt is the fellow’s name,” said the Master, “at least that by which he passes at present.”

“Craig-in-guilt,” said Caleb, punning upon the word *craig*, which in Scotch signifies throat; “if he is Craig-in-guilt just now, he is as likely to be Craig-in-peril as ony chield I ever



saw — the loon has woodie written on his very visnomy, and I wad wager twa and a plack that hemp plaits his cravat yet."

"You understand physiognomy, good Mr Caleb," said the Keeper, smiling; "I assure you the gentleman has been near such a consummation before now — for I most distinctly recollect, that, upon occasion of a journey which I made about a fortnight ago to Edinburgh, I saw Mr Craigengelt, or whatever is his name, undergo a severe examination before the Privy Council."

"Upon what account?" said the Master of Ravenswood, with some interest.

The question led immediately to a tale which the Lord Keeper had been very anxious to introduce, when he could find a graceful and fitting opportunity. He took hold of the Master's arm, and led him back towards the hall. "The answer to your question," he said, "though it is a ridiculous business, is only fit for your own ear."

As they entered the hall, he again took the Master apart into one of the recesses of the window, where it will be easily believed that Miss Ashton did not venture again to intrude upon their conference.

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 CHAPTER XVII.

*— Here is a father now,  
Will truck his daughter for a foreign venture,  
Make her the stop-gap to some cankered feud,  
Or fling her o'er, like Jonah, to the fishes,  
To appease the sea at highest.*

*Anonymous.*

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THE Lord Keeper opened his communication with an appearance of unconcern, marking, however, very carefully, the effect of his communication upon young Ravenswood.

“You are aware,” he said, “my young friend, that suspicion is the natural vice of our unsettled times, and exposes the best and wisest of us to the imposition of artful rascals. If I had been disposed to listen to such the other day, or even if I had been the wily politician which you have been taught to believe me, you, Master of Ravenswood, instead of being at freedom,



and with full liberty to solicit and act against me as you please, in defence of what you suppose to be your rights, would have been in the Castle of Edinburgh, or some other state prison; or, if you had escaped that destiny, it must have been by flight to a foreign country, and at the risk of a sentence of fugitation."

"My Lord Keeper," said the Master, "I think you would not jest on such a subject — yet it seems impossible you can be in earnest."

"Innocence," said the Lord Keeper, "is also confident, and sometimes, though very excusably, presumptuously so."

"I do not understand," said Ravenswood, "how a consciousness of innocence can be, in any case, accounted presumptuous."

"Imprudent, at least, it may be called," said Sir William Ashton, "since it is apt to lead us into the mistake of supposing that sufficiently evident to others, of which, in fact, we are only conscious ourselves. I have known a rogue, for this very reason, make a better defence than an innocent man could have done in the same circumstances of suspicion. Having no consciousness of innocence to support him, such a fellow applies himself to all the advantages which the law will afford him, and sometimes (if his counsel be men of talent,) succeeds in compelling his judges to receive him as innocent. I



remember the celebrated case of Sir Coolie Condiddle of Condiddle, who was tried for theft under trust, of which all the world knew him guilty, and yet was not only acquitted, but lived to sit in judgment on honest folk."

"Allow me to beg you will return to the point," said the Master; "you seemed to say that I had suffered under some suspicion."

"Suspicion, Master? — ay, truly — and I can shew you the proofs of it; if I happen only to have them with me. — Here, Lockhard" — His attendant came — "Fetch me the little private mail with the padlocks, that I recommended to your particular charge — d'ye hear?"

"Yes, my lord." Lockhard vanished; and the Keeper continued as if half speaking to himself.

"I think the papers are with me — I think so, for as I was to be in this country, it was natural for me to bring them with me. I have them, however, at Ravenswood Castle, that I am sure of — so perhaps you might condescend" —

Here Lockhard entered, and put the leathern scrutoire, or mail-box, into his hands. The Keeper produced one or two papers, respecting the information laid before the Privy Council, concerning the riot, as it was termed, at the funeral of Allan Lord Ravenswood, and the



active share he had himself taken in quashing the proceedings against the Master. These documents had been selected with care, so as to irritate the natural curiosity of Ravenswood upon such a subject, without gratifying it, yet to shew that Sir William Ashton had acted upon that trying occasion the part of an advocate and peacemaker betwixt him and the jealous authorities of the day. Having furnished his host with such subjects for examination, the Lord Keeper went to the breakfast-table, and entered into light conversation, addressed partly to old Caleb, whose resentment against the usurper of the Castle of Ravenswood began to be softened by his familiarity, and partly to his daughter.

After perusing these papers, the Master of Ravenswood remained for a minute or two with his hand pressed against his brow, in deep and profound meditation. He then again ran his eye hastily over the papers, as if desirous of discovering in them some deep purpose, or some mark of fabrication, which had escaped him at first perusal. Apparently the second reading confirmed the opinion which had pressed upon him at the first, for he started from the stone bench on which he was sitting, and, going to the Lord Keeper, took his hand, and, strongly pressing it, asked his pardon repeated-



ly for the injustice he had done him, when it appeared he was experiencing, at his hands, the benefit of protection to his person, and vindication to his character.

The statesman received these acknowledgments at first with well-feigned surprise, and then with an affectation of frank cordiality. The tears began already to start from Lucy's blue eyes at viewing this unexpected and moving scene. To see the Master, late so haughty and reserved, and whom she had always supposed the injured person, supplicating her father for forgiveness, was a change at once surprising, flattering, and affecting.

"Dry your eyes, Lucy," said her father; "why should you weep, because your father, though a lawyer, is discovered to be a fair and honourable man? — What have you to thank me for, my dear Master," he continued, addressing Ravenswood, "that you would not have done in my case? *Suum cuique tribuito*," was the Roman justice, and I learned it when I studied Justinian. Besides, have you not overpaid me a thousand times in saving the life of this dear child?"

"Yes," answered the Master, in all the remorse of self-accusation; "but the little service I did was an act of mere brutal instinct; your defence of my cause, when you knew how



ill I thought of you, and how much I was disposed to be your enemy, was an act of generous, manly, and considerate wisdom."

"Pshaw!" said the Lord Keeper, "each of us acted in his own way; you as a gallant soldier, I as an upright judge and privy-councillor. We could not, perhaps, have changed parts — at least I should have made a very sorry *Tauridor*, and you, my good Master, though your cause is so excellent, might have pleaded it perhaps worse yourself, than I who acted for you before the council."

"My generous friend!" said Ravenswood; and with that brief word, which the Keeper had often lavished on him, but which he himself now pronounced for the first time, he gave to his feudal enemy the full confidence of an haughty but honourable heart. He had been remarked among his contemporaries for sense and acuteness, as well as for his reserved, pertinacious, and irascible character. His prepossessions accordingly, however obstinate, were of a nature to give way before love and gratitude; and the real charms of the daughter, joined to the supposed services of the father, cancelled in his memory the vows of vengeance which he had taken so deeply on the eve of his father's funeral. But they had been heard and registered in the book of fate.



Caleb was present at this extraordinary scene, and he could conceive no other reason for a proceeding so extraordinary than an alliance betwixt the houses, and Ravenswood Castle assigned for the young lady's dowry. As for Lucy, when Ravenswood uttered the most passionate excuses for his ungrateful negligence, she could but smile through her tears, and, as she abandoned her hand to him, assure him, in broken accents, of the delight with which she beheld the complete reconciliation between her father and her deliverer. Even the statesman was moved and affected by the fiery, unreserved, and generous self-abandonment with which the Master of Ravenswood renounced his feudal enmity, and threw himself without hesitation upon his forgiveness. His eyes glistened as he looked upon a couple who were obviously becoming attached, and who seemed made for each other. He thought how high the proud and chivalrous character of Ravenswood might rise under many circumstances, in which *he* found himself "over-crowded," to use a phrase of Spencer, and kept under, by his brief pedigree, and timidity of disposition. Then his daughter — his favourite child — his constant play-mate — seemed formed to live happy in a union with such a commanding spirit as Ravenswood; and even the fine, delicate, fragile



form of Lucy Ashton seemed to require the support of the Master's muscular strength and masculine character. And it was not merely during a few minutes that Sir William Ashton looked upon their marriage as a probable and even desirable event, for a full hour intervened ere his imagination was crossed by recollection of the Master's poverty, and the certain displeasure of Lady Ashton. It is certain, that the very unusual flow of kindly feeling with which the Lord Keeper had been thus surprised, was one of the circumstances which gave much tacit encouragement to the attachment between the Master and his daughter, and led both the lovers distinctly to believe that it was a connection which would be most agreeable to him. He himself was supposed to have admitted this effect, when, long after the catastrophe of their love, he used to warn his hearers against permitting their feelings to obtain an ascendancy over their judgment, and affirm that the greatest misfortune of his life was owing to a very temporary predominance of sensibility over self-interest. It must be owned, if such was the case, he was long and severely punished for an offence of very brief duration.

After some pause, the Lord Keeper resumed the conversation. — „In your surprise at find-



ing me an honest man than you expected, you have lost your curiosity about this Craigen-gelt, my good Master; and yet your name was brought in the course of that matter too."

"The scoundrel!" said Ravenswood; "my connection with him was of the most temporary nature possible; and yet I was very foolish to hold any communication with him at all. — What did he say of me?"

"Enough," said the Keeper, "to excite the very loyal terrors of some of our sages, who are for proceeding against men on the mere grounds of suspicion or mercenary information — Some nonsense about your proposing to enter into the service of France, or of the Pretender, I don't recollect which, but which the Marquis of A —, one of your best friends, and another person, one of your worst and most interested enemies, could not, some how, be brought to listen to."

"I am obliged to my honourable friend — and yet" — shaking the Lord Keeper's hand — "and yet I am still more obliged to my honourable enemy."

"*Inimicus amicissimus*," said the Lord Keeper, returning the pressure; "but this gentleman — this Mr Haystoun of Bucklaw — I am afraid the poor young man — I heard the fellow mention his name — is under very bad guidance."



“He is old enough to govern himself,” answered the Master.

“Old enough, perhaps, but scarce wise enough, if he has chosen this fellow for his *fidus Achates*. Why, he lodged an information against him — that is, such a consequence might have ensued from his examination, had we not looked rather at the character of the witness than the tenor of his evidence.”

“Mr Haystoun of Bucklaw,” said the Master, “is, I believe, a most honourable man, and capable of nothing that is mean or disgraceful.”

“Capable of much that is unreasonable though, that you must needs allow, Master. Death will soon put him in possession of a fair estate, if he hath it not already; old Lady Girnington — an excellent person, excepting that her inveterate ill-nature rendered her intolerable to the whole world — is probably dead by this time. Six heirs portioners have successively died to make her wealthy. I know the estates well; they march with my own — a noble property.”

“I am glad of it,” said Ravenswood, “and should be more so, were I confident that Bucklaw would change his company and habits with his fortunes. This appearance of Craigengelt, acting in the capacity of his friend, is a most vile augury for his future respectability.”



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“He is a bird of evil omen, to be sure,” said the Keeper, “and croaks of jail and gallows-tree. — But I see Mr Caleb grows impatient for our return to breakfast.”



## CHAPTER XVIII.

*Sir, stay at home and take an old man's  
council;*

*Seek not to bask you by a stranger's hearth;*

*Our own blue smoke is warmer than their fire.*

*Domestic food is wholesome, though 'tis ho-  
mely,*

*And foreign dainties poisonous, though taste-  
ful.*

### The French Courtezan.

THE Master of Ravenswood took an opportunity to leave his guests to prepare for their departure, while he himself made the brief arrangements necessary previous to his absence from Wolf's Crag for a day or two. It was necessary to communicate with Caleb on this occasion, and he found that faithful servitor in his sooty and ruinous den, greatly delighted with the departure of their visitors, and computing how



long, with good management, the provisions which had been unexpended might furnish forth the Master's table. „He's nae belly-god, that's ae blessing; and Bucklaw's gane, that could have eaten a horse behind the saddle. Cresses or waterpurpie, and a bit oat-cake, can serve the Master for breakfast as weel as Caleb. Than for dinner — there's no muckle left on the spule-bane; it will brander though — it will brander very weel.”

His triumphant calculations were interrupted by the Master, who communicated to him, not without some hesitation, his purpose to ride with the Lord Keeper as far as Ravenswood Castle, and to remain there for a day or two.”

„The mercy of Heaven forbid!” said the old serving-man, turning as pale as the table-cloth which he was folding up.

„And why, Caleb?” said his master, „why should the mercy of Heaven forbid my returning the Lord Keeper's visit?”

„Oh, sir!” replied Caleb — „O Mr Edgar! I am your servant, and it ill becomes me to speak — but I am an auld servant — have served baith your father and goodsire, and mind to have seen Lord Randal, your great-grandfather — but that was when I was a bairn.”



“And what of all this, Balderstone?” answered the Master; “what can it possibly have to do with my paying some ordinary civility to a neighbour?”

“O Mr Edgar, — that is, my lord!” — answered the Butler, “your ain conscience tells you it isna for your father’s son to be neighbouring wi’ the like o’ him — it isna for the credit of the family. An he were ance come to terms, and to gi’e ye back your ain, e’en though you suld honour his house wi’ your alliance, I suldna say na — for the young leddy is a winsome sweet creature — But keep your ain state wi’ them — I ken the race o’ them weel — they will think the mair o’ ye.”

“Why, now, you go farther than I do, Caleb,” said the Master, drowning a certain degree of consciousness in a forced laugh; “you are for marrying me into a family that you will not allow me to visit — how’s this? — and you look as pale as death besides.”

“O, sir,” repeated Caleb again, “you would but laugh if I tauld it; but Thomas the Rhymer, whose tongue couldna be fause, spoke the word of your house that will e’en prove ower true if you go to Ravenswood this day — O that it should e’er have been fulfilled in my time!”

“And what is it, Caleb?” said Ravenswood, wishing to sooth the fears of his old servant.



Caleb replied, "he had never repeated the lines to living mortal — they were told to him by an auld priest that had been confessor to Lord Allan's father when the family were catholic. But mony a time," he said, "I hae sougheed thae dark words ower to mysell, and, well-a-day! little did I think of their coming round this day."

"Truce with your nonsense, and let me hear the doggrel which has put it into your head," said the Master impatiently.

With a quivering voice, and a cheek pale with apprehension, Caleb faltered out the following lines: —

"When the last Laird of Ravenswood to Ravenswood shall ride,  
And wooe a dead maiden to be his bride,  
He shall stable his steed in the Kelpie's flow,  
And his name shall be lost for evermoe!"

"I know the Kelpie's flow well enough; I suppose, at least, you mean the quicksand betwixt this tower and Wolf's-hope, but why any man in his senses should stable a steed there" —

"O, never speer ony thing about that, sir — God forbid we should ken what the prophecy



means — but just bide you at hame, and let the strangers ride to Ravenswood by themselves. We have done aneugh for them; and to do mair, would be mair against the credit of the family than in its favour.”

“Well, Caleb,” said the Master, “I give you the best possible credit for your good advice on this occasion; but as I do not go to Ravenswood to seek a bride, dead or alive, I hope I shall chuse a better stable for my horse than the Kelpie’s quick-sand, and especially as I have always had a particular dread of it since the patrolle of dragoons were lost there ten years since. My father and I saw them from the tower struggling against the advancing tide, and they were lost long before any help could reach them.”

“And they deserved it weel, the southern loons,” said Caleb; “what had they ado capering on our sands, and hindering a wheen honest folk frae bringing on shore a drap brandy? I hae seen them that busy, that I wad hae fired the auld culverin, or the demisaker that’s on the south bartizan at them, only I was feared they might burst in the ganging off.”

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that his master found no great difficulty in escaping from him and rejoining his guests. All was now ready for their departure; and one of the Lord Keeper's grooms having saddled the Master's steed, they mounted in the court-yard.

Caleb had, with much toil, opened the double doors of the outward gate, and thereat stationed himself, endeavouring, by the reverential, and, at the same time, consequential air which he assumed, to supply, by his own gaunt, wasted, and thin person, the absence of a whole baronial establishment of porters, warders, and liveried menials.

The Keeper returned his deep reverence with a cordial farewell, stooping at the same time from his horse, and sliding into the Butler's hand the remuneration, which in those days was always given by a departing guest to the domestics of the family where he had been entertained. Lucy smiled on the old man with her usual sweetness, bade him adieu, and deposited her guerdon with a grace of action, and a gentleness of accent, which could not have failed to have won the faithful retainer's heart, but for Thomas the Rhymer, and the successful law-suit against his master. As it was, he might have adopted the language of the Duke, in *As you like it* —



“Thou wou'dst have better pleased me with  
this deed,

If thou hadst told me of another father.” —

Ravenswood was at the lady's bridle-rein, encouraging her timidity, and guiding her horse carefully down the rocky path which led to the moor, when one of the servants announced from the rear that Caleb was calling loudly after them, desiring to speak with his master. Ravenswood felt it would look singular to neglect this summons, although inwardly cursing Caleb for his impertinent officiousness; therefore he was compelled to relinquish to Mr Lockhard the agreeable duty in which he was engaged, and to ride back to the gate of the court-yard. Here he was beginning, somewhat peevishly, to ask Caleb the cause of his clamour, when the good old man exclaimed, “Whisht, sir! whisht, and let me speak just ae word that I couldna say afore folk — there” — (putting into his lord's hand the money he had just received) — “there's three gowd pieces — and ye'll want siller up-by yonder — but stay, whisht now!” — for the Master was beginning to exclaim against this transference — “never say a word, but just see to get them changed in the first town ye ride through, for they are bran new frae the mint, and kenspeckle a wee bit.”



“You forget, Caleb,” said his master, striving to force back the money on his servant, and extricate the bridle from his hold — “You forget that I have some gold pieces left of my own. Keep these to yourself, my old friend; and, once more, good day to you. I assure you I have plenty. You know you have managed that our living should cost us little or nothing.”

“Aweel,” said Caleb, “these will serve for you another time; but see ye hae aneugh, for, doubtless, for the credit of the family, there maun be some civility to the servants, and ye maun hae something to mak a show with when they say, Master, will you bet a broad piece? Then ye maun tak out your purse, and say, I carena if I do; and tak care no to agree on the articles of the wager, and just put up your purse again, and” —

“This is intolerable, Caleb — I really must be gone.”

“And you will go, then?” said Caleb, loosening his hold upon the Master’s cloak, and changing his didactics into a pathetic and mournful tone — “And you *will* go, for a’ I have told you about the prophecy, and the dead bride, and the Kelpie’s quicksand? — Aweel! a wilful man maun hae his way — he that will to Cupar



maun to Cupar. But pity of your life, sir, if ye be fowling or shooting in the Park — beware of drinking at the Mermaiden's well — He's gane! he's down the path, arrow-flight after her! — The head is as clean ta'en aff the Ravenswood family this day, as I wad chap the head aff a sybo!"

The old Butler looked long after his master, often clearing away the dew as it rose to his eyes, that he might, as long as possible, distinguish his stately form from those of the other horsemen. "Close to her bridle-rein — ay, close to her bridle-rein! — Wisely saith the holy man, 'By this also you may know that woman hath dominion over all men;' — and without this lass would not our ruin have been altogether fulfilled."

With an heart fraught with such sad auguries did Caleb return to his necessary duties at Wolf's Crag, so soon as he could no longer distinguish the object of his anxiety among the groupe of riders, which diminished in the distance.

In the mean time the party pursued their route joyfully. Having once taken his resolution, the Master of Ravenswood was not of a character to hesitate or pause upon it. He abandoned himself to the pleasure he felt in Miss Ashton's



company, and displayed an assiduous gallantry, which approached as nearly to gaiety as the temper of his mind and state of his family permitted. The Lord Keeper was much struck with his depth of observation, and the unusual improvement which he had derived from his studies. Of these accomplishments Sir William Ashton's profession and habits of society rendered him an excellent judge; and he well knew how to appreciate a quality to which he himself was a total stranger, the brief and decided dauntlessness of the Master of Ravenswood's disposition, who seemed equally a stranger to doubt and to fear. In his heart the Lord Keeper rejoiced at having conciliated an adversary so formidable, while, with a mixture of pleasure and anxiety, he anticipated the great things his young companion might achieve, were the breath of court-favour to fill his sails.

“What could she desire,” he thought, his mind always conjuring up opposition in the person of Lady Ashton to his now prevailing wish — “What could a woman desire in a match, more than the sopiting of a very dangerous claim, and the alliance of a son-in-law, noble, brave, well-gifted, and highly-connected — sure to float whenever the tide sets his way — strong, exactly where we are weak, in pedigree and in



the temper of a swordsman? — Sure no reasonable woman would hesitate — But, alas!" — Here his argument was stopped by the consciousness that Lady Ashton was not always reasonable, in his sense of the word. "To prefer some clownish Merse laird to the gallant young nobleman, and to the secure possession of Ravenswood upon terms of easy compromise — it would be the act of a madwoman!"

Thus pondered the veteran politician, until they reached Bittlebrains House, where it had been previously settled they were to dine and repose themselves, and prosecute their journey in the afternoon.

They were received with an excess of hospitality; and the most marked attention was offered to the Master of Ravenswood, in particular, by their noble entertainers. The truth was, that Lord Bittlebrains had obtained his peerage by a good deal of plausibility, an art of building up a character for wisdom upon a very trite style of common-place eloquence, a steady observation of the changes of the times, and the power of rendering certain political services to those who could best reward them. His lady and he not feeling quite easy under their new honours, to which use had not adapted their feelings, were very desirous to procure the fraternal counten-



ance of those who were born denizens of the regions into which they had been exalted from a lower sphere. The extreme attentions which they paid to the Master of Ravenswood, had its usual effect in exalting his importance in the eyes of the Lord Keeper, who, although he had a reasonable degree of contempt for Lord Bittlebrains' general parts, entertained a high opinion of the acuteness of his judgment in matters of self-interest.

"I wish Lady Ashton had seen this," was his internal reflection; „no man knows so well as Bittlebrains on which side his bread is buttered; and he fawns on the Master like a beggar's messan on a cook. And my lady, too, bringing forward her beetle-browed misses to skirl and play upon the virginals, as if she said, pick and chuse. They are no more comparable to Lucy than an owl is to a cygnet, and so they may carry their black brows to a farther market."

The entertainment being ended, our travellers, who had still to measure the longest part of their journey, resumed their horses; and after the Lord Keeper, the Master, and the domestics, had drunk *dochan dorroch*, or the stirrup-cup, in the liquors adapted to their various ranks, the cavalcade resumed its progress.



It was dark by the time they entered the avenue of Ravenswood Castle, a long straight line leading directly to the front of the house, flanked with huge elm-trees, which sighed to the night-wind, as if they compassionated the heir of their ancient proprietors, who now returned to their shades in the society, and almost in the retinue, of their new master. Some feelings of the same kind oppressed the mind of the Master himself. He gradually became silent, and dropped a little behind the lady, at whose bridle-rein he had hitherto waited with such devotion. He well recollected the period, when, at the same hour in the evening, he had accompanied his father, as that nobleman left, never again to return to it, the mansion from which he derived his name and title. The extensive front of the old castle, on which he remembered having often looked back, was then "as black as mourning weed." The same front now glanced with many lights, some throwing far forward into the night a fixed and stationary blaze, and others hurrying from one window to another, intimating the bustle and busy preparation preceding their arrival, which had been intimated by an avant-courier. The contrast pressed so strongly upon the Master's heart, as to awaken some of the sterner feelings with which he had been accustomed to regard the new



lord of his paternal domain, and to impress his countenance with an air of severe gravity, when, alighted from his horse, he stood in the hall no longer his own, surrounded by the numerous menials of its present owner.

The Lord Keeper, when about to welcome him with the cordiality which their late intercourse seemed to render proper, became aware of the change, refrained from his purpose, and only intimated the ceremony of reception by a deep reverence to his guest, seeming thus delicately to share the feelings which predominated on his brow.

Two upper domestics, bearing each a huge pair of silver candlesticks, now marshalled the company into a large saloon or with-drawing room, where new alterations impressed upon Ravenswood the superior wealth of the present inhabitants of the castle. The mouldering tapestry, which, in his father's time, had half covered the walls of this stately apartment, and half streamed from them in tatters, had given place to a complete finishing of wainscot, the cornice of which, as well as the frames of the various compartments, were ornamented with festoons of flowers and with birds, which, though carved in oak, seemed, such was the art of the chisel, actually to swell their throats, and flut



ter their wings. Several old family portraits of armed heroes of the house of Ravenswood, together with a suit or two of old armour, and some military weapons, had given place to those of King William and Queen Mary, of Sir Thomas Hope and Lord Stair, two distinguished Scottish lawyers. The pictures of the Lord Keeper's father and mother were also to be seen; the latter, sour, shrewish, and solemn, in her black hood and close pinnars, with a book of devotion in her hand; the former, exhibiting beneath a black silk Geneva cowl, or scull-cap, which sate as close to the head as if it had been shaven, a pinched, peevish, puritanical set of features, terminating in a hungry, reddish, peaked beard, forming on the whole a countenance, in the expression of which the hypocrite seemed to contend with the miser and the knave. And it is to make room for such as these, thought Ravenswood, that my ancestors have been torn from the walls which they erected. He looked at them again, and, as he looked, the recollection of Lucy Ashton (for she had not entered the apartment with them) seemed less lively in his imagination. There were also two or three Dutch drolleries, as the pictures of Ostade and Teniers were then termed, with one good painting of the Italian school. There was, besides, a noble full-length of the Lord Keeper in his robes of



birth and sense of internal dignity — the mellow and expressive tones of his voice, the desolate state of his fortunes, and the indifference with which he seemed to endure and to dare the worst that might befall, rendered him a dangerous object of contemplation for a maiden already too much disposed to dwell upon recollections connected with him. When their eyes encountered each other, both blushed deeply, conscious of some strong internal emotion, and shunned again to meet each other's look.

Sir William Ashton had, of course, closely watched the expression of their countenances. "I need fear," thought he to himself, "neither Parliament nor protestation; I have an effectual mode of reconciling myself with this hot-tempered young fellow, in case he shall become formidable. The present object is, at all events, to avoid committing ourselves. The hook is fixed; we will not strain the line too soon — it is as well to reserve the privilege of slipping it loose, if we do not find the fish worth landing."

In this selfish and cruel calculation upon the supposed attachment of Ravenswood to Lucy, he was so far from considering the pain he might give to the former, by thus dallying with his affections, that he did not even think upon the risk of involving his own daughter in the perils of an unfortunate passion; as if her predilection,



which could not escape his attention, were like the flame of a taper, which might be lighted or extinguished at pleasure. But Providence had prepared a dreadful requital for this keen observer of human passions, who had spent his life in securing advantages to himself by artfully working upon the passions of others.

Caleb Balderstone now came to announce that breakfast was prepared; for in those days of substantial feeding, the reliques of the supper amply furnished forth the morning meal. Neither did he forget to present to the Lord Keeper, with great reverence, a morning-draught in a large pewter cup, garnished with leaves of parsley and scurvy-grass. He craved pardon, of course, for having omitted to serve it in the great silver standing cup as behoved, being that it was at present in a silversmith's in Edinburgh, for the purpose of being overlaid with gilt.

«In Edinburgh sure enough,” said Ravenswood; «but in what place, or for what purpose, I am afraid neither your nor I know.”

«Aweel!” said Caleb peevishly, «there’s a man standing at the gate already this morning — that’s ae thing that I ken — Does your honour ken whether ye will speak wi’ him or no?”

«Does he wish to speak with me, Caleb?”

«Less will no serve him,” said Caleb; «but ye had best take a visie of him through the wicket



before opening the gate — its no every ane we suld let into this castle.”

“What! do you suppose him to be a messenger come to arrest me for debt?” said Ravenswood.

“A messenger arrest your honour for debt, and in your Castle of Wolf’s Crag! — Your honour is jeasting wi’ auld Caleb this morning.” However, he whispered in his ear as he followed him out, “I would be loth to do ony decent man a prejudice in your honour’s gude opinion; but I wad take twa looks of that chield before I let him within these walls.”

He was not an officer of the law, however; being no less a person than Captain Craigen-gelt, with his nose as red as a comfortable cup of brandy could make it, his laced cocked-hat set a little aside upon the top of his black riding periwig, a sword by his side, and pistols at his holsters, and his person arrayed in a riding suit, laid over with tarnished lace, — the very moral of one who would say, Stand, to a true man.

When the Master had recognized him, he ordered the gates to be opened. “I suppose,” he said, “Captain Craigen-gelt, there are no such weighty matters betwixt you and me, but what may be discussed in this place. I have company in the castle at present, and the terms



upon which we last parted must excuse my asking you to make part of them."

Craigengelt, although possessing the very perfection of impudence, was somewhat abashed by this unfavourable reception. "He had no intention," he said, "to force himself upon the Master of Ravenswood's hospitality — he was in the honourable service of bearing a message to him from a friend, otherwise the Master of Ravenswood should not have had reason to complain of this intrusion."

"Let it be short, sir," said the Master, "for that will be the best apology. Who is the gentleman who is so fortunate as to have your services as a messenger?"

"My friend Mr Hayston of Bucklaw," answered Craigengelt, with conscious importance, and that confidence which the acknowledged courage of his principal inspired, "who conceives himself to have been treated by you with something much short of the respect which he had reason to demand, and therefore is resolved to exact satisfaction. I bring with me," said he, taking a piece of paper out of his pocket, "the precise length of his sword; and he requests you will meet him, accompanied by a friend, and equally armed, at any place within a mile of the castle, when I shall give attendance as umpire or second on his behalf."



«Satisfaction — and equal arms!» repeated Ravenswood, who, the reader will recollect, had no reason to suppose he had given the slightest offence to his late inmate — «upon my word, Captain Craigengelt, either you have invented the most improbable falsehood that ever came into the mind of such a person, or your morning-draught has been somewhat of the strongest. What could persuade Bucklaw to send me such a message?»

«For that, sir,” replied Craigengelt, «I am desired to refer you to what, in duty to my friend, I am to term your inhospitality in excluding him from your house, without reasons assigned.”

«It is impossible,” replied the Master; «he cannot be such a fool as to interpret actual necessity as an insult. Nor do I believe, that, knowing my opinion of you, captain, he would have employed the services of so slight and inconsiderable a person as yourself upon such an errand, as I certainly could expect no man of honour to act with you in the office of umpire.”

«I slight and inconsiderable!” said Craigengelt, raising his voice, and laying his hand on his cutlass; «if it were not that the quarrel of my friend craves the precedence, and is in dependence before my own, I would give you to understand” —



«I can understand nothing upon your explanation, Captain Craigengelt. Be satisfied of that, and oblige me with your departure.»

«D——n!» muttered the bully; «and is this the answer which I am to carry back to an honourable message?»

«Tell the Laird of Bucklaw,» answered Ravenswood, «if you are really sent by him, that when he sends me his cause of grievance by a person fitting to carry such an errand betwixt him and me, I will either explain it or maintain it.»

«Then, Master, you will at least cause to be returned to Hayston, by my hands, his property which is remaining in your possession.»

«Whatever property Bucklaw may have left behind him, sir,» replied the Master, «shall be returned to him by my servant, as you do not shew me any credentials from him which entitle you to receive it.»

«Well, Master,» said Captain Craigengelt, with malice which even his fear of the consequences could not suppress; «you have this morning done me an egregious wrong and dishonour, but far more to yourself. A castle indeed?» he continued, looking around him; «why this is worse than a *coupe-gorge* house, where they receive travellers to plunder them of their property.»



“You insolent rascal,” said the Master, raising his cane, and making a grasp at the captain’s bridle, “if you do not depart without uttering another syllable, I will baton you to death.”

At the motion of the Master towards him, the bully turned so sharply round, that with some difficulty he escaped throwing down his horse, whose hoofs struck fire from the rocky pavement in every direction. Recovering him, however, with the bridle, he pushed for the gate, and rode sharply back again in the direction of the village.

As Ravenswood turned round to leave the court-yard after this dialogue, he found that the Lord Keeper had descended from the hall, and witnessed, though at the distance prescribed by politeness, his interview with Craigengelt.

“I have seen,” said the Lord Keeper, “that gentleman’s face, and at no great distance of time — his name is Craig — Craig — something, is it not?”

“Craigengelt is the fellow’s name,” said the Master, “at least that by which he passes at present.”

“Craig-in-guilt,” said Caleb, punning upon the word *craig*, which in Scotch signifies throat; “if he is Craig-in-guilt just now, he is as likely to be Craig-in-peril as ony chield I ever



saw — the loon has woodie written on his very visnomy, and I wad wager twa and a plack that hemp plaits his cravat yet."

"You understand physiognomy, good Mr Caleb," said the Keeper, smiling; "I assure you the gentleman has been near such a consummation before now — for I most distinctly recollect, that, upon occasion of a journey which I made about a fortnight ago to Edinburgh, I saw Mr Craigengelt, or whatever is his name, undergo a severe examination before the Privy Council."

"Upon what account?" said the Master of Ravenswood, with some interest.

The question led immediately to a tale which the Lord Keeper had been very anxious to introduce, when he could find a graceful and fitting opportunity. He took hold of the Master's arm, and led him back towards the hall. "The answer to your question," he said, "though it is a ridiculous business, is only fit for your own ear."

As they entered the hall, he again took the Master apart into one of the recesses of the window, where it will be easily believed that Miss Ashton did not venture again to intrude upon their conference.

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 CHAPTER XVII.

— *Here is a father now,  
Will truck his daughter for a foreign venture,  
Make her the stop-gap to some cankered feud,  
Or fling her o'er, like Jonah, to the fishes,  
To appease the sea at highest.*

*Anonymous.*

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THE Lord Keeper opened his communication with an appearance of unconcern, marking, however, very carefully, the effect of his communication upon young Ravenswood.

“You are aware,” he said, “my young friend, that suspicion is the natural vice of our unsettled times, and exposes the best and wisest of us to the imposition of artful rascals. If I had been disposed to listen to such the other day, or even if I had been the wily politician which you have been taught to believe me, you, Master of Ravenswood, instead of being at freedom,



and with full liberty to solicit and act against me as you please, in defence of what you suppose to be your rights, would have been in the Castle of Edinburgh, or some other state prison; or, if you had escaped that destiny, it must have been by flight to a foreign country, and at the risk of a sentence of fugitation."

"My Lord Keeper," said the Master, "I think you would not jest on such a subject — yet it seems impossible you can be in earnest."

"Innocence," said the Lord Keeper, "is also confident, and sometimes, though very excusably, presumptuously so."

"I do not understand," said Ravenswood, "how a consciousness of innocence can be, in any case, accounted presumptuous."

"Imprudent, at least, it may be called," said Sir William Ashton, "since it is apt to lead us into the mistake of supposing that sufficiently evident to others, of which, in fact, we are only conscious ourselves. I have known a rogue, for this very reason, make a better defence than an innocent man could have done in the same circumstances of suspicion. Having no consciousness of innocence to support him, such a fellow applies himself to all the advantages which the law will afford him, and sometimes (if his counsel be men of talent,) succeeds in compelling his judges to receive him as innocent. I



remember the celebrated case of Sir Coolie Condiddle of Condiddle, who was tried for theft under trust, of which all the world knew him guilty, and yet was not only acquitted, but lived to sit in judgment on honest folk."

"Allow me to beg you will return to the point," said the Master; "you seemed to say that I had suffered under some suspicion."

"Suspicion, Master? — ay, truly — and I can shew you the proofs of it; if I happen only to have them with me. — Here, Lockhard" — His attendant came — "Fetch me the little private mail with the padlocks, that I recommended to your particular charge — d'ye hear?"

"Yes, my lord." Lockhard vanished; and the Keeper continued as if half speaking to himself.

"I think the papers are with me — I think so, for as I was to be in this country, it was natural for me to bring them with me. I have them, however, at Ravenswood Castle, that I am sure of — so perhaps you might condescend" —

Here Lockhard entered, and put the leathern scrutoire, or mail-box, into his hands. The Keeper produced one or two papers, respecting the information laid before the Privy Council, concerning the riot, as it was termed, at the funeral of Allan Lord Ravenswood, and the



active share he had himself taken in quashing the proceedings against the Master. These documents had been selected with care, so as to irritate the natural curiosity of Ravenswood upon such a subject, without gratifying it, yet to shew that Sir William Ashton had acted upon that trying occasion the part of an advocate and peacemaker betwixt him and the jealous authorities of the day. Having furnished his host with such subjects for examination, the Lord Keeper went to the breakfast-table, and entered into light conversation, addressed partly to old Caleb, whose resentment against the usurper of the Castle of Ravenswood began to be softened by his familiarity, and partly to his daughter.

After perusing these papers, the Master of Ravenswood remained for a minute or two with his hand pressed against his brow, in deep and profound meditation. He then again ran his eye hastily over the papers, as if desirous of discovering in them some deep purpose, or some mark of fabrication, which had escaped him at first perusal. Apparently the second reading confirmed the opinion which had pressed upon him at the first, for he started from the stone bench on which he was sitting, and, going to the Lord Keeper, took his hand, and, strongly pressing it, asked his pardon repeated-



ly for the injustice he had done him, when it appeared he was experiencing, at his hands, the benefit of protection to his person, and vindication to his character.

The statesman received these acknowledgments at first with well-feigned surprise, and then with an affectation of frank cordiality. The tears began already to start from Lucy's blue eyes at viewing this unexpected and moving scene. To see the Master, late so haughty and reserved, and whom she had always supposed the injured person, supplicating her father for forgiveness, was a change at once surprising, flattering, and affecting.

"Dry your eyes, Lucy," said her father; "why should you weep, because your father, though a lawyer, is discovered to be a fair and honourable man? — What have you to thank me for, my dear Master," he continued, addressing Ravenswood, "that you would not have done in my case? *Suum cuique tribuito*," was the Roman justice, and I learned it when I studied Justinian. Besides, have you not overpaid me a thousand times in saving the life of this dear child?"

"Yes," answered the Master, in all the remorse of self-accusation; "but the little service I did was an act of mere brutal instinct; your defence of my cause, when you knew how



ill I thought of you, and how much I was disposed to be your enemy, was an act of generous, manly, and considerate wisdom."

"Pshaw!" said the Lord Keeper, "each of us acted in his own way; you as a gallant soldier, I as an upright judge and privy-councillor. We could not, perhaps, have changed parts — at least I should have made a very sorry *Tauridor*, and you, my good Master, though your cause is so excellent, might have pleaded it perhaps worse yourself, than I who acted for you before the council."

"My generous friend!" said Ravenswood; and with that brief word, which the Keeper had often lavished on him, but which he himself now pronounced for the first time, he gave to his feudal enemy the full confidence of an haughty but honourable heart. He had been remarked among his contemporaries for sense and acuteness, as well as for his reserved, pertinacious, and irascible character. His prepossessions accordingly, however obstinate, were of a nature to give way before love and gratitude; and the real charms of the daughter, joined to the supposed services of the father, cancelled in his memory the vows of vengeance which he had taken so deeply on the eve of his father's funeral. But they had been heard and registered in the book of fate.



Caleb was present at this extraordinary scene, and he could conceive no other reason for a proceeding so extraordinary than an alliance betwixt the houses, and Ravenswood Castle assigned for the young lady's dowry. As for Lucy, when Ravenswood uttered the most passionate excuses for his ungrateful negligence, she could but smile through her tears, and, as she abandoned her hand to him, assure him, in broken accents, of the delight with which she beheld the complete reconciliation between her father and her deliverer. Even the statesman was moved and affected by the fiery, unreserved, and generous self-abandonment with which the Master of Ravenswood renounced his feudal enmity, and threw himself without hesitation upon his forgiveness. His eyes glistened as he looked upon a couple who were obviously becoming attached, and who seemed made for each other. He thought how high the proud and chivalrous character of Ravenswood might rise under many circumstances, in which *he* found himself "over-crowded," to use a phrase of Spencer, and kept under, by his brief pedigree, and timidity of disposition. Then his daughter — his favourite child — his constant play-mate — seemed formed to live happy in a union with such a commanding spirit as Ravenswood; and even the fine, delicate, fragile



form of Lucy Ashton seemed to require the support of the Master's muscular strength and masculine character. And it was not merely during a few minutes that Sir William Ashton looked upon their marriage as a probable and even desirable event, for a full hour intervened ere his imagination was crossed by recollection of the Master's poverty, and the certain displeasure of Lady Ashton. It is certain, that the very unusual flow of kindly feeling with which the Lord Keeper had been thus surprised, was one of the circumstances which gave much tacit encouragement to the attachment between the Master and his daughter, and led both the lovers distinctly to believe that it was a connection which would be most agreeable to him. He himself was supposed to have admitted this effect, when, long after the catastrophe of their love, he used to warn his hearers against permitting their feelings to obtain an ascendancy over their judgment, and affirm that the greatest misfortune of his life was owing to a very temporary predominance of sensibility over self-interest. It must be owned, if such was the case, he was long and severely punished for an offence of very brief duration.

After some pause, the Lord Keeper resumed the conversation. — „In your surprise at find-



ing me an honest man than you expected, you have lost your curiosity about this Craigen-gelt, my good Master; and yet your name was brought in the course of that matter too."

"The scoundrel!" said Ravenswood; "my connection with him was of the most temporary nature possible; and yet I was very foolish to hold any communication with him at all. — What did he say of me?"

"Enough," said the Keeper, "to excite the very loyal terrors of some of our sages, who are for proceeding against men on the mere grounds of suspicion or mercenary information — Some nonsense about your proposing to enter into the service of France, or of the Pretender, I don't recollect which, but which the Marquis of A —, one of your best friends, and another person, one of your worst and most interested enemies, could not, some how, be brought to listen to."

"I am obliged to my honourable friend — and yet" — shaking the Lord Keeper's hand — "and yet I am still more obliged to my honourable enemy."

"*Inimicus amicissimus*," said the Lord Keeper, returning the pressure; "but this gentleman — this Mr Haystoun of Bucklaw — I am afraid the poor young man — I heard the fellow mention his name — is under very bad guidance."



“He is old enough to govern himself,” answered the Master.

“Old enough, perhaps, but scarce wise enough, if he has chosen this fellow for his *fidus Achates*. Why, he lodged an information against him — that is, such a consequence might have ensued from his examination, had we not looked rather at the character of the witness than the tenor of his evidence.”

“Mr Haystoun of Bucklaw,” said the Master, “is, I believe, a most honourable man, and capable of nothing that is mean or disgraceful.”

“Capable of much that is unreasonable though, that you must needs allow, Master. Death will soon put him in possession of a fair estate, if he hath it not already; old Lady Girnington — an excellent person, excepting that her inveterate ill-nature rendered her intolerable to the whole world — is probably dead by this time. Six heirs portioners have successively died to make her wealthy. I know the estates well; they march with my own — a noble property.”

“I am glad of it,” said Ravenswood, “and should be more so, were I confident that Bucklaw would change his company and habits with his fortunes. This appearance of Craigengelt, acting in the capacity of his friend, is a most vile augury for his future respectability.”



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"Enough," said the Keeper, "to excite the very loyal terrors of some of our sages, who are for proceeding against men on the mere grounds of suspicion or mercenary information — Some nonsense about your proposing to enter into the service of France, or of the Pretender, I don't recollect which, but which the Marquis of A — —, one of your best friends, and another person, one of your worst and most interested enemies, could not, some how, be brought to listen to."

"I am obliged to my honourable friend — and yet" — shaking the Lord Keeper's hand — "and yet I am still more obliged to my honourable enemy."

"*Inimicus amicissimus*," said the Lord Keeper, returning the pressure; "but this gentleman — this Mr Haystoun of Bucklaw — I am afraid the poor young man — I heard the fellow mention his name — is under very bad guidance."



“He is old enough to govern himself,” answered the Master.

“Old enough, perhaps, but scarce wise enough, if he has chosen this fellow for his *fidus Achates*. Why, he lodged an information against him — that is, such a consequence might have ensued from his examination, had we not looked rather at the character of the witness than the tenor of his evidence.”

“Mr Haystoun of Bucklaw,” said the Master, “is, I believe, a most honourable man, and capable of nothing that is mean or disgraceful.”

“Capable of much that is unreasonable though, that you must needs allow, Master. Death will soon put him in possession of a fair estate, if he hath it not already; old Lady Girnington — an excellent person, excepting that her inveterate ill-nature rendered her intolerable to the whole world — is probably dead by this time. Six heirs portioners have successively died to make her wealthy. I know the estates well; they march with my own — a noble property.”

“I am glad of it,” said Ravenswood, “and should be more so, were I confident that Bucklaw would change his company and habits with his fortunes. This appearance of Craigengelt, acting in the capacity of his friend, is a most vile augury for his future respectability.”



“He is a bird of evil omen, to be sure,” said the Keeper, “and croaks of jail and gallows-tree. — But I see Mr Caleb grows impatient for our return to breakfast.”



## CHAPTER XVIII.

*Sir, stay at home and take an old man's  
council;*

*Seek not to bask you by a stranger's hearth;  
Our own blue smoke is warmer than their fire.*

*Domestic food is wholesome, though 'tis ho-  
mely,*

*And foreign dainties poisonous, though taste-  
ful.*

### *The French Courtezan.*

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THE Master of Ravenswood took an opportunity to leave his guests to prepare for their departure, while he himself made the brief arrangements necessary previous to his absence from Wolf's Crag for a day or two. It was necessary to communicate with Caleb on this occasion, and he found that faithful servitor in his sooty and ruinous den, greatly delighted with the departure of their visitors, and computing how



long, with good management, the provisions which had been unexpended might furnish forth the Master's table. „He's nae belly-god, that's ae blessing; and Bucklaw's gane, that could have eaten a horse behind the saddle. Cresses or waterpurpie, and a bit oat-cake, can serve the Master for breakfast as weel as Caleb. Than for dinner — there's no muckle left on the spule-bane; it will brander though — it will brander very weel.”

His triumphant calculations were interrupted by the Master, who communicated to him, not without some hesitation, his purpose to ride with the Lord Keeper as far as Ravenswood Castle, and to remain there for a day or two.”

„The mercy of Heaven forbid!” said the old serving-man, turning as pale as the table-cloth which he was folding up.

„And why, Caleb?” said his master, „why should the mercy of Heaven forbid my returning the Lord Keeper's visit?”

„Oh, sir!” replied Caleb — „O Mr Edgar! I am your servant, and it ill becomes me to speak — but I am an auld servant — have served baith your father and goodsire, and mind to have seen Lord Randal, your great-grandfather — but that was when I was a bairn.”



“And what of all this, Balderstone?” answered the Master; “what can it possibly have to do with my paying some ordinary civility to a neighbour?”

“O Mr Edgar, — that is, my lord!” — answered the Butler, “your ain conscience tells you it isna for your father’s son to be neighbouring wi’ the like o’ him — it isna for the credit of the family. An he were ance come to terms, and to gi’e ye back your ain, e’en though you suld honour his house wi’ your alliance, I suldna say na — for the young leddy is a winsome sweet creature — But keep your ain state wi’ them — I ken the race o’ them weel — they will think the mair o’ ye.”

“Why, now, you go farther than I do, Caleb,” said the Master, drowning a certain degree of consciousness in a forced laugh; “you are for marrying me into a family that you will not allow me to visit — how’s this? — and you look as pale as death besides.”

“O, sir,” repeated Caleb again, “you would but laugh if I tauld it; but Thomas the Rhymer, whose tongue couldna be fause, spoke the word of your house that will e’en prove ower true if you go to Ravenswood this day — O that it should e’er have been fulfilled in my time!”

“And what is it, Caleb?” said Ravenswood, wishing to sooth the fears of his old servant.



Caleb replied, "he had never repeated the lines to living mortal — they were told to him by an auld priest that had been confessor to Lord Allan's father when the family were catholic. But mony a time," he said, "I hae sougheed thae dark words ower to mysell, and, well-a-day! little did I think of their coming round this day."

"Truce with your nonsense, and let me hear the doggrel which has put it into your head," said the Master impatiently.

With a quivering voice, and a cheek pale with apprehension, Caleb faltered out the following lines: —

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And wooe a dead maiden to be his bride,  
He shall stable his steed in the Kelpie's flow,  
And his name shall be lost for evermoe!"

"I know the Kelpie's flow well enough; I suppose, at least, you mean the quicksand betwixt this tower and Wolf's-hope, but why any man in his senses should stable a steed there" —

"O, never speer ony thing about that, sir — God forbid we should ken what the prophecy



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Ravenswood was at the lady's bridle-rein, encouraging her timidity, and guiding her horse carefully down the rocky path which led to the moor, when one of the servants announced from the rear that Caleb was calling loudly after them, desiring to speak with his master. Ravenswood felt it would look singular to neglect this summons, although inwardly cursing Caleb for his impertinent officiousness; therefore he was compelled to relinquish to Mr Lockhard the agreeable duty in which he was engaged, and to ride back to the gate of the court-yard. Here he was beginning, somewhat peevishly, to ask Caleb the cause of his clamour, when the good old man exclaimed, “Whisht, sir! whisht, and let me speak just ae word that I couldna say afore folk — there” — (putting into his lord's hand the money he had just received) — “there's three gowd pieces — and ye'll want siller up-by yonder — but stay, whisht now!” — for the Master was beginning to exclaim against this transference — “never say a word, but just see to get them changed in the first town ye ride through, for they are bran new frae the mint, and kenspeckle a wee bit.”



“You forget, Caleb,” said his master, striving to force back the money on his servant, and extricate the bridle from his hold — “You forget that I have some gold pieces left of my own. Keep these to yourself, my old friend; and, once more, good day to you. I assure you I have plenty. You know you have managed that our living should cost us little or nothing.”

“Aweel,” said Caleb, “these will serve for you another time; but see ye hae aneugh, for, doubtless, for the credit of the family, there maun be some civility to the servants, and ye maun hae something to mak a show with when they say, Master, will you bet a broad piece? Then ye maun tak out your purse, and say, I carena if I do; and tak care no to agree on the articles of the wager, and just put up your purse again, and” —

“This is intolerable, Caleb — I really must be gone.”

“And you will go, then?” said Caleb, loosening his hold upon the Master’s cloak, and changing his didactics into a pathetic and mournful tone — “And you *will* go, for a’ I have told you about the prophecy, and the dead bride, and the Kelpie’s quicksand? — Aweel! a wilful man maun hae his way — he that will to Cupar



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The old Butler looked long after his master, often clearing away the dew as it rose to his eyes, that he might, as long as possible, distinguish his stately form from those of the other horsemen. "Close to her bridle-rein — ay, close to her bridle-rein! — Wisely saith the holy man, 'By this also you may know that woman hath dominion over all men;' — and without this lass would not our ruin have been altogether fulfilled."

With an heart fraught with such sad auguries did Caleb return to his necessary duties at Wolf's Crag, so soon as he could no longer distinguish the object of his anxiety among the groupe of riders, which diminished in the distance.

In the mean time the party pursued their route joyfully. Having once taken his resolution, the Master of Ravenswood was not of a character to hesitate or pause upon it. He abandoned himself to the pleasure he felt in Miss Ashton's



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“What could she desire,” he thought, his mind always conjuring up opposition in the person of Lady Ashton to his now prevailing wish — “What could a woman desire in a match, more than the sopiting of a very dangerous claim, and the alliance of a son-in-law, noble, brave, well-gifted, and highly-connected — sure to float whenever the tide sets his way — strong, exactly where we are weak, in pedigree and in



the temper of a swordsman? — Sure no reasonable woman would hesitate — But, alas!" — Here his argument was stopped by the consciousness that Lady Ashton was not always reasonable, in his sense of the word. "To prefer some clownish Merse laird to the gallant young nobleman, and to the secure possession of Ravenswood upon terms of easy compromise — it would be the act of a madwoman!"

Thus pondered the veteran politician, until they reached Bittlebrains House, where it had been previously settled they were to dine and repose themselves, and prosecute their journey in the afternoon.

They were received with an excess of hospitality; and the most marked attention was offered to the Master of Ravenswood, in particular, by their noble entertainers. The truth was, that Lord Bittlebrains had obtained his peerage by a good deal of plausibility, an art of building up a character for wisdom upon a very trite style of common-place eloquence, a steady observation of the changes of the times, and the power of rendering certain political services to those who could best reward them. His lady and he not feeling quite easy under their new honours, to which use had not adapted their feelings, were very desirous to procure the fraternal counten-



ance of those who were born denizens of the regions into which they had been exalted from a lower sphere. The extreme attentions which they paid to the Master of Ravenswood, had its usual effect in exalting his importance in the eyes of the Lord Keeper, who, although he had a reasonable degree of contempt for Lord Bittlebrains' general parts, entertained a high opinion of the acuteness of his judgment in matters of self-interest.

"I wish Lady Ashton had seen this," was his internal reflection; „no man knows so well as Bittlebrains on which side his bread is buttered; and he fawns on the Master like a beggar's messan on a cook. And my lady, too, bringing forward her beetle-browed misses to skirl and play upon the virginals, as if she said, pick and chuse. They are no more comparable to Lucy than an owl is to a cygnet, and so they may carry their black brows to a farther market."

The entertainment being ended, our travellers, who had still to measure the longest part of their journey, resumed their horses; and after the Lord Keeper, the Master, and the domestics, had drunk *dochan dorroch*, or the stirrup-cup, in the liquors adapted to their various ranks, the cavalcade resumed its progress.



It was dark by the time they entered the avenue of Ravenswood Castle, a long straight line leading directly to the front of the house, flanked with huge elm-trees, which sighed to the night-wind, as if they compassionated the heir of their ancient proprietors, who now returned to their shades in the society, and almost in the retinue, of their new master. Some feelings of the same kind oppressed the mind of the Master himself. He gradually became silent, and dropped a little behind the lady, at whose bridle-rein he had hitherto waited with such devotion. He well recollected the period, when, at the same hour in the evening, he had accompanied his father, as that nobleman left, never again to return to it, the mansion from which he derived his name and title. The extensive front of the old castle, on which he remembered having often looked back, was then "as black as mourning weed." The same front now glanced with many lights, some throwing far forward into the night a fixed and stationary blaze, and others hurrying from one window to another, intimating the bustle and busy preparation preceding their arrival, which had been intimated by an avant-courier. The contrast pressed so strongly upon the Master's heart, as to awaken some of the sterner feelings with which he had been accustomed to regard the new



lord of his paternal domain, and to impress his countenance with an air of severe gravity, when, alighted from his horse, he stood in the hall no longer his own, surrounded by the numerous menials of its present owner.

The Lord Keeper, when about to welcome him with the cordiality which their late intercourse seemed to render proper, became aware of the change, refrained from his purpose, and only intimated the ceremony of reception by a deep reverence to his guest, seeming thus delicately to share the feelings which predominated on his brow.

Two upper domestics, bearing each a huge pair of silver candlesticks, now marshalled the company into a large saloon or with-drawing room, where new alterations impressed upon Ravenswood the superior wealth of the present inhabitants of the castle. The mouldering tapestry, which, in his father's time, had half covered the walls of this stately apartment, and half streamed from them in tatters, had given place to a complete finishing of wainscot, the cornice of which, as well as the frames of the various compartments, were ornamented with festoons of flowers and with birds, which, though carved in oak, seemed, such was the art of the chisel, actually to swell their throats, and flut



ter their wings. Several old family portraits of armed heroes of the house of Ravenswood, together with a suit or two of old armour, and some military weapons, had given place to those of King William and Queen Mary, of Sir Thomas Hope and Lord Stair, two distinguished Scottish lawyers. The pictures of the Lord Keeper's father and mother were also to be seen; the latter, sour, shrewish, and solemn, in her black hood and close pinnars, with a book of devotion in her hand; the former, exhibiting beneath a black silk Geneva cowl, or scull-cap, which sate as close to the head as if it had been shaven, a pinched, peevish, puritanical set of features, terminating in a hungry, reddish, peaked beard, forming on the whole a countenance, in the expression of which the hypocrite seemed to contend with the miser and the knave. And it is to make room for such as these, thought Ravenswood, that my ancestors have been torn from the walls which they erected. He looked at them again, and, as he looked, the recollection of Lucy Ashton (for she had not entered the apartment with them) seemed less lively in his imagination. There were also two or three Dutch drolleries, as the pictures of Ostade and Teniers were then termed, with one good painting of the Italian school. There was, besides, a noble full-length of the Lord Keeper in his robes of



office, placed beside his lady in silk and ermine, a haughty beauty, bearing in her looks all the pride of the House of Douglas, from which she was descended. The painter, notwithstanding his skill, overcome by the reality, or, perhaps, from a suppressed sense of humour, had not been able to give the husband on the canvass that air of awful rule and right supremacy, which indicates the full possession of domestic authority. It was obvious, at the first glance, that, despite mace and gold frogs, the Lord Keeper was somewhat hen-pecked. The floor of this fine saloon was laid with rich carpets, huge fires blazed in the double chimnies, and ten silver sconces reflecting, with their bright plates, the lights which they supported, made the whole seem as brilliant as day.

„Would you chuse any refreshment, Master?” said Sir William Ashton, not unwilling to break the awkward silence.

He received no answer, the Master being so busily engaged in marking the various changes which had taken place in the apartment, that he hardly heard the Lord Keeper address him. A repetition of the offer of refreshment, with the addition, that the family meal would be presently ready, compelled his attention, and reminded him, that he acted a weak, perhaps



even a ridiculous part, in suffering himself to be overcome by the circumstances in which he found himself. He compelled himself, therefore, to enter into conversation with Sir William Ashton, with as much appearance of indifference as he could well command.

“You will not be surprised, Sir William, that I am interested in the changes you have made for the better in this apartment. In my father’s time, after our misfortunes compelled him to live in retirement, it was little used, except by me as a play-room, when the weather would not permit me to go abroad. In that recess was my little work-shop, where I treasured the few carpenter’s tools which old Caleb procured for me, and taught me how to use — there, in yonder corner, under that handsome silver sconce, I kept my fishing-rods, and hunting poles, bows, and arrows.”

“I have a young birkie,” said the Lord Keeper, willing to change the tone of the conversation, “of much the same turn — He is never happy, save when he is in the field — I wonder he is not here. — Here, Lockhard — send William Shaw for Mr Henry — I suppose he is, as usual, tied to Lucy’s apron-string — that foolish girl, Master, draws the whole family after her at her pleasure.”



Even this allusion to his daughter, though artfully thrown out, did not recal Ravenswood from his own topic.

“We were obliged to leave,” he said, “some armour and portraits in this apartment — may I ask where they have been removed to?”

“Why,” answered the Keeper, with some hesitation, “the room was fitted up in our absence — and *cedant arma togæ*, is the maxim of lawyers you know — I am afraid it has been here somewhat too literally complied with. I hope — I believe they are safe — I am sure I gave orders — may I hope that when they are recovered and put in proper order, you will do me the honour to accept them at my hand, as an atonement for their accidental derangement?”

The Master of Ravenswood bowed stifly, and, with folded arms, again resumed his survey of the room.

Henry, a spoilt boy of fifteen, burst into the room, and ran up to his father. “Think of Lucy, papa; she has come home so cross and so fractious, that she will not go down to the stable to see my new poney, that Bob Wilson brought from the Mull of Galloway.”

“I think you were very unreasonable to ask her,” said the Keeper.



“Then you are as cross as she is,” answered the boy; “and when mamma comes home she’ll claw up both your mittens.”

“Hush your impertinence, you little forward imp,” said his father; “where is your tutor?”

“Gone to a wedding at Dunbar — I hope he’ll get a haggis to his dinner!” and he began to sing the old Scottish song,

“There was a haggis in Dunbar,  
Fal de ral, etc.

Mony better and few waur,  
Fal de ral,” etc.

“I am much obliged to Mr Cordery for his attentions,” said the Lord Keeper; “and pray who has had charge of you while I was away, Mr Henry?”

“Norman and Bob Wilson — forbye my own self.”

“A groom and a game-keeper, and your own silly self — proper guardians for a young advocate! — Why, you will never know any statutes but those against shooting red deer, killing salmon, and ” —



Caleb replied, "he had never repeated the lines to living mortal — they were told to him by an auld priest that had been confessor to Lord Allan's father when the family were catholic. But mony a time," he said, "I hae sougheed thae dark words ower to mysell, and, well-a-day! little did I think of their coming round this day."

"Truce with your nonsense, and let me hear the doggrel which has put it into your head," said the Master impatiently.

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company, and displayed an assiduous gallantry, which approached as nearly to gaiety as the temper of his mind and state of his family permitted. The Lord Keeper was much struck with his depth of observation, and the unusual improvement which he had derived from his studies. Of these accomplishments Sir William Ashton's profession and habits of society rendered him an excellent judge; and he well knew how to appreciate a quality to which he himself was a total stranger, the brief and decided dauntlessness of the Master of Ravenswood's disposition, who seemed equally a stranger to doubt and to fear. In his heart the Lord Keeper rejoiced at having conciliated an adversary so formidable, while, with a mixture of pleasure and anxiety, he anticipated the great things his young companion might achieve, were the breath of court-favour to fill his sails.

“What could she desire,” he thought, his mind always conjuring up opposition in the person of Lady Ashton to his now prevailing wish — “What could a woman desire in a match, more than the sopiting of a very dangerous claim, and the alliance of a son-in-law, noble, brave, well-gifted, and highly-connected — sure to float whenever the tide sets his way — strong, exactly where we are weak, in pedigree and in



the temper of a swordsman? — Sure no reasonable woman would hesitate — But, alas!" — Here his argument was stopped by the consciousness that Lady Ashton was not always reasonable, in his sense of the word. "To prefer some clownish Merse laird to the gallant young nobleman, and to the secure possession of Ravenswood upon terms of easy compromise — it would be the act of a madwoman!"

Thus pondered the veteran politician, until they reached Bittlebrains House, where it had been previously settled they were to dine and repose themselves, and prosecute their journey in the afternoon.

They were received with an excess of hospitality; and the most marked attention was offered to the Master of Ravenswood, in particular, by their noble entertainers. The truth was, that Lord Bittlebrains had obtained his peerage by a good deal of plausibility, an art of building up a character for wisdom upon a very trite style of common-place eloquence, a steady observation of the changes of the times, and the power of rendering certain political services to those who could best reward them. His lady and he not feeling quite easy under their new honours, to which use had not adapted their feelings, were very desirous to procure the fraternal counten-



ance of those who were born denizens of the regions into which they had been exalted from a lower sphere. The extreme attentions which they paid to the Master of Ravenswood, had its usual effect in exalting his importance in the eyes of the Lord Keeper, who, although he had a reasonable degree of contempt for Lord Bittlebrains' general parts, entertained a high opinion of the acuteness of his judgment in matters of self-interest.

"I wish Lady Ashton had seen this," was his internal reflection; "no man knows so well as Bittlebrains on which side his bread is buttered; and he fawns on the Master like a beggar's messan on a cook. And my lady, too, bringing forward her beetle-browed misses to skirl and play upon the virginals, as if she said, pick and chuse. They are no more comparable to Lucy than an owl is to a cygnet, and so they may carry their black brows to a farther market."

The entertainment being ended, our travellers, who had still to measure the longest part of their journey, resumed their horses; and after the Lord Keeper, the Master, and the domestics, had drunk *dochan dorroch*, or the stirrup-cup, in the liquors adapted to their various ranks, the cavalcade resumed its progress.



It was dark by the time they entered the avenue of Ravenswood Castle, a long straight line leading directly to the front of the house, flanked with huge elm-trees, which sighed to the night-wind, as if they compassionated the heir of their ancient proprietors, who now returned to their shades in the society, and almost in the retinue, of their new master. Some feelings of the same kind oppressed the mind of the Master himself. He gradually became silent, and dropped a little behind the lady, at whose bridle-rein he had hitherto waited with such devotion. He well recollected the period, when, at the same hour in the evening, he had accompanied his father, as that nobleman left, never again to return to it, the mansion from which he derived his name and title. The extensive front of the old castle, on which he remembered having often looked back, was then "as black as mourning weed." The same front now glanced with many lights, some throwing far forward into the night a fixed and stationary blaze, and others hurrying from one window to another, intimating the bustle and busy preparation preceding their arrival, which had been intimated by an avant-courier. The contrast pressed so strongly upon the Master's heart, as to awaken some of the sterner feelings with which he had been accustomed to regard the new



lord of his paternal domain, and to impress his countenance with an air of severe gravity, when, alighted from his horse, he stood in the hall no longer his own, surrounded by the numerous menials of its present owner.

The Lord Keeper, when about to welcome him with the cordiality which their late intercourse seemed to render proper, became aware of the change, refrained from his purpose, and only intimated the ceremony of reception by a deep reverence to his guest, seeming thus delicately to share the feelings which predominated on his brow.

Two upper domestics, bearing each a huge pair of silver candlesticks, now marshalled the company into a large saloon or with-drawing room, where new alterations impressed upon Ravenswood the superior wealth of the present inhabitants of the castle. The mouldering tapestry, which, in his father's time, had half covered the walls of this stately apartment, and half streamed from them in tatters, had given place to a complete finishing of wainscot, the cornice of which, as well as the frames of the various compartments, were ornamented with festoons of flowers and with birds, which, though carved in oak, seemed, such was the art of the chisel, actually to swell their throats, and flut



ter their wings. Several old family portraits of armed heroes of the house of Ravenswood, together with a suit or two of old armour, and some military weapons, had given place to those of King William and Queen Mary, of Sir Thomas Hope and Lord Stair, two distinguished Scottish lawyers. The pictures of the Lord Keeper's father and mother were also to be seen; the latter, sour, shrewish, and solemn, in her black hood and close pinnars, with a book of devotion in her hand; the former, exhibiting beneath a black silk Geneva cowl, or scull-cap, which sate as close to the head as if it had been shaven, a pinched, peevish, puritanical set of features, terminating in a hungry, reddish, peaked beard, forming on the whole a countenance, in the expression of which the hypocrite seemed to contend with the miser and the knave. And it is to make room for such as these, thought Ravenswood, that my ancestors have been torn from the walls which they erected. He looked at them again, and, as he looked, the recollection of Lucy Ashton (for she had not entered the apartment with them) seemed less lively in his imagination. There were also two or three Dutch drolleries, as the pictures of Ostade and Teniers were then termed, with one good painting of the Italian school. There was, besides, a noble full-length of the Lord Keeper in his robes of



office, placed beside his lady in silk and ermine, a haughty beauty, bearing in her looks all the pride of the House of Douglas, from which she was descended. The painter, notwithstanding his skill, overcome by the reality, or, perhaps, from a suppressed sense of humour, had not been able to give the husband on the canvass that air of awful rule and right supremacy, which indicates the full possession of domestic authority. It was obvious, at the first glance, that, despite mace and gold frogs, the Lord Keeper was somewhat hen-pecked. The floor of this fine saloon was laid with rich carpets, huge fires blazed in the double chimnies, and ten silver sconces reflecting, with their bright plates, the lights which they supported, made the whole seem as brilliant as day.

„Would you chuse any refreshment, Master?“ said Sir William Ashton, not unwilling to break the awkward silence.

He received no answer, the Master being so busily engaged in marking the various changes which had taken place in the apartment, that he hardly heard the Lord Keeper address him. A repetition of the offer of refreshment, with the addition, that the family meal would be presently ready, compelled his attention, and reminded him, that he acted a weak, perhaps



even a ridiculous part, in suffering himself to be overcome by the circumstances in which he found himself. He compelled himself, therefore, to enter into conversation with Sir William Ashton, with as much appearance of indifference as he could well command.

“You will not be surprised, Sir William, that I am interested in the changes you have made for the better in this apartment. In my father’s time, after our misfortunes compelled him to live in retirement, it was little used, except by me as a play-room, when the weather would not permit me to go abroad. In that recess was my little work-shop, where I treasured the few carpenter’s tools which old Caleb procured for me, and taught me how to use — there, in yonder corner, under that handsome silver sconce, I kept my fishing-rods, and hunting poles, bows, and arrows.”

“I have a young birkie,” said the Lord Keeper, willing to change the tone of the conversation, “of much the same turn — He is never happy, save when he is in the field — I wonder he is not here. — Here, Lockhard — send William Shaw for Mr Henry — I suppose he is, as usual, tied to Lucy’s apron-string — that foolish girl, Master, draws the whole family after her at her pleasure.”



Even this allusion to his daughter, though artfully thrown out, did not recal Ravenswood from his own topic.

“We were obliged to leave,” he said, “some armour and portraits in this apartment — may I ask where they have been removed to?”

“Why,” answered the Keeper, with some hesitation, “the room was fitted up in our absence — and *cedant arma togæ*, is the maxim of lawyers you know — I am afraid it has been here somewhat too literally complied with. I hope — I believe they are safe — I am sure I gave orders — may I hope that when they are recovered and put in proper order, you will do me the honour to accept them at my hand, as an atonement for their accidental derangement?”

The Master of Ravenswood bowed stiffly, and, with folded arms, again resumed his survey of the room.

Henry, a spoilt boy of fifteen, burst into the room, and ran up to his father. “Think of Lucy, papa; she has come home so cross and so fractious, that she will not go down to the stable to see my new poney, that Bob Wilson brought from the Mull of Galloway.”

“I think you were very unreasonable to ask her,” said the Keeper.



“Then you are as cross as she is,” answered the boy; “and when mamma comes home she’ll claw up both your mittens.”

“Hush your impertinence, you little forward imp,” said his father; “where is your tutor?”

“Gone to a wedding at Dunbar — I hope he’ll get a haggis to his dinner!” and he began to sing the old Scottish song,

“There was a haggis in Dunbar,  
Fal de ral, etc.

Mony better and few waur,  
Fal de ral,” etc.

“I am much obliged to Mr Cordery for his attentions,” said the Lord Keeper; “and pray who has had charge of you while I was away, Mr Henry?”

“Norman and Bob Wilson — forbye my own self.”

“A groom and a game-keeper, and your own silly self — proper guardians for a young advocate! — Why, you will never know any statutes but those against shooting red deer, killing salmon, and” —



«And speaking of red-game,” said the young scape-grace, interrupting his father without scruple or hesitation, «Norman has shot a buck, and I shewed the branches to Lucy, and she says they have but eight tynes, and she says that you killed a deer with Lord Bittlebrains’ hounds, when you were west away, and do you know she says it had ten tynes — is it true?”

«It may have had twenty, Henry, for what I know; but if you go to that gentleman he can tell you all about it — Go speak to him, Henry — it is the Master of Ravenswood.”

While they conversed thus, the father and son were standing by the fire; and the Master having walked towards the upper end of the apartment, stood with his back towards them, apparently engaged in examining one of the paintings. The boy ran up to him, and pulled him by the skirt of the coat with the freedom of a spoilt child, saying, «I say, sir — if you please to tell me” — but when the Master turned round, and Henry saw his face, he became suddenly and totally disconcerted — walked two or three steps backward, and still gazed on the Master with an air of fear and wonder, which had totally banished from his features their usual expression of pert vivacity.



“Come to me, young gentleman,” said the Master, “and I will tell you all I know about the hunt.”

“Go to the gentleman, Henry,” said his father, “you are not used to be so shy.”

But neither invitation nor exhortation had any effect on the boy. On the contrary, he turned round as soon as he had completed his survey of the Master, and walking as cautiously as if he had been treading upon eggs, he glided back to his father, and pressed as close to him as possible. Ravenswood, to avoid hearing the dispute betwixt the father and the over-indulged boy, thought it most polite to turn his face once more towards the pictures, and pay no attention to what they said.

“Why do you not speak to the Master, you little fool?” said the Lord Keeper.

“I am afraid,” said Henry, in a very low tone.

“Afraid, you goose!” said his father, giving him a slight shake by the collar. “What makes you afraid?”

“What makes him so like the picture of Sir Malise Ravenswood, then?” said the boy, whispering.



“What picture, you natural?” said his father. “I used to think you only a scape-grace, but I believe you will turn out a born idiot.”

“I tell you it is the picture of old Malise of Ravenswood, and he is as like it as if he had loupén out of the canvas; and it is up in the old Baron’s hall that the maids launder the clothes in, and it has armour and not a coat like the gentleman, and he has not a beard and whiskers like the picture, and it has another kind of thing about the throat and no band-strings as he has, and” —

“And why should not the gentleman be like his ancestor, you silly boy?” said the Lord Keeper.

“Ay; but if he is come to chase us all out of the castle,” said the boy, “and has twenty men at his back in disguise — and is come to say, with a hollow voice, *I bide my time*, — and is to kill you on the hearth as Malise did the other man, and whose blood is still to be seen!”

“Hush! nonsense!” said the Lord Keeper, not himself much pleased to hear these disagreeable coincidences forced on his notice. “Master, here comes Lockhard to say dinner is served.”

And, at the same instant, Lucy entered at another door, having changed her dress since



her return. The exquisite feminine beauty of her countenance, now shaded only by a profusion of sunny tresses; the sylph-like form disencumbered of her heavy riding-skirt, and mantled in azure silk; the grace of her manner and of her smile, cleared, with a celerity which surprised the Master himself, all the gloomy and unfavourable thoughts which had for some time over-clouded his fancy. In those features, so simply sweet, he could trace no alliance with the pinched visage of the peak-bearded black-capped puritan, or his starched withered spouse, with the craft expressed in the Lord Keeper's countenance, or the haughtiness which predominated in that of his lady; and, while he gazed on Lucy Ashton, she seemed to be an angel descended on earth, unallied to the coarser mortals among whom she deigned to dwell for a season. Such is the power of beauty over a youthful and enthusiastic fancy.



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 CHAPTER XIX.

——— *I do too ill in this,  
 And must not think but that a parent's plaint  
 Will move the heavens to pour forth misery  
 Upon the head of disobedience.  
 Yet reason tells us, parents are o'erseen,  
 When with too strict a rein they do hold in  
 Their child's affection, and controul that love,  
 Which the high powers divine inspire them  
 with.*

*The Hog hath lost his Pearl.*

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THE feast of Ravenswood Castle was as remarkable for its profusion, as that of Wolf's Crag had been for its ill-veiled penury. The Lord Keeper might feel internal pride at the contrast, but he had too much *tact* to suffer it to appear. On the contrary, he appeared to remember with pleasure what he called Mr Balderstone's bachelor's meal, and to be rather disgusted than



pleased with the display upon his own groaning board.

“We do these things,” he said, “because others do them — but I was bred a plain man at my father’s frugal table, and I should like well would my wife and family permit me to return to my sowens and my poor-man-of-mutton.”

This was a little over-stretched. The Master only answered, “That different ranks — I mean,” said he, correcting himself, “different degrees of wealth, require a different style of house-keeping.”

This dry remark put a stop to farther conversation on the subject, nor is it necessary to record that which was substituted in its place. The evening was spent with freedom, and even cordiality; and Henry had so far overcome his first apprehensions, that he had settled a party for coursing a stag with the representative and living resemblance of grim Sir Malise of Ravenswood, called the Revenger. The next morning was the appointed time. It rose upon active sportsmen and successfull sport. The banquet came in course; and a pressing invitation to tarry yet another day was given and accepted. This Ravenswood had resolved should be the last



of his stay; but he recollected he had not yet visited the ancient and devoted servant of his house, old Alice, and it was but kind to dedicate one morning to the gratification of so ancient an adherent.

To visit Alice, therefore, a day was devoted, and Lucy was the Master's guide upon the way. Henry, it is true, accompanied them, and took from their walk the air of a *tête-à-tête*, while, in reality, it was little else, considering the variety of circumstances which occurred to prevent the boy from giving the least attention to what passed between his companions. Now a rook settled on a branch within shot — anon a hare crossed their path, and Henry and his greyhound went astray in pursuit of it — then he had to hold a long conversation with the forester, which detained him a while behind his companions — and again he went to examine the earth of a badger, which carried him on a good way before them.

The conversation betwixt the Master and his sister, meanwhile, took an interesting, and almost a confidential turn. She could not help mentioning her sense of the pain he must feel in visiting scenes so well known to him, bearing now an aspect so different; and so gently was her sympathy expressed, that Ravenswood



felt it for a moment as a full requital of all his misfortunes. Some such sentiment escaped him, which Lucy heard with more of confusion than displeasure; and she may be forgiven the imprudence of listening to such language, considering that the situation in which she was placed by her father seemed to authorise Ravenswood to use it. Yet she made an effort to turn the conversation, and she succeeded; for the Master also had advanced farther than he intended, and his conscience had instantly checked him when he found himself on the verge of speaking of love to the daughter of Sir William Ashton.

They now approached the hut of old Alice, which had of late been rendered more comfortable, and presented an appearance less picturesque, perhaps, but far neater than before. The old woman was on her accustomed seat beneath the weeping birch, basking, with the listless enjoyment of age and infirmity, in the beams of the autumn sun. At the arrival of her visitors she turned her head towards them. "I hear your step, Miss Ashton," she said, "but the gentleman who attends you is not my lord, your father."

"And why should you think so, Alice?" said Lucy; "or how is it possible for you to judge



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"And why should you think so, Alice?" said Lucy; "or how is it possible for you to judge



so accurately by the sound of a step, on this firm earth, and in the open air?"

"My hearing, my child, has been sharpened by my blindness, and I can now judge of the slightest sounds, which formerly reached my ears as unheeded as they now approach yours. Necessity is a stern, but an excellent school-mistress, and she that has lost her sight must collect her information from other sources."

"Well, you hear a man's step, I grant it," said Lucy; "but why, Alice, may it not be my father's?"

"The pace of age, my love, is timid and cautious — the foot takes leave of the earth slowly, and is planted down upon it with hesitation; it is the hasty and determined step of youth that I now hear, and — could I give credit to so strange a thought — I should say it was the step of a Ravenswood."

"This is indeed," said Ravenswood, "an acuteness of organ which I could not have credited had I not witnessed it. — I am indeed the Master of Ravenswood, Alice — the son of your old master."

"You?" said the old woman with almost a scream of surprise — "you, the Master of Ra-



venswood — here — in this place, and thus accompanied? — I cannot believe it — Let me pass my old hand over your face, that my touch may bear witness to my ears.”

The Master sate down beside her on the earthen bank, and permitted her to touch his features with her trembling hand.

“It is indeed!” she said, “it is the features as well as the voice of Ravenswood — the high lines of pride, as well as the bold and haughty tone — But what do you here, Master of Ravenswood? — what do you in your enemy’s domain, and in company with his child?”

As old Alice spoke, her face kindled, as probably that of an ancient feudal vassal might have done, in whose presence his youthful liege-lord had shewed some symptom of degenerating from the spirit of his ancestors.

“The Master of Ravenswood,” said Lucy, who liked not the tone of this expostulation, and was desirous to abridge it, “is upon a visit to my father.”

“Indeed!” said the old blind woman, in an accent of surprise.

“I knew,” continued Lucy, “I should do him a pleasure by conducting him to your cottage.”



“Where, to say the truth, Alice,” said Ravenswood, “I expected a more cordial reception.”

“It is most wonderful,” said the old woman, muttering to herself; “but the ways of Heaven are not like our ways, and its judgments are brought about by means far beyond our fathoming. — Harken, young man,” she said; “your fathers were implacable, but they were honourable foes; they sought not to ruin their enemies under the mask of hospitality. What have you to do with Lucy Ashton? — why should your steps move in the same foot path with her’s? — why should your voice sound in the same chord and time with those of Sir William Ashton’s daughter? — Young man, he who aims at revenge by dishonourable means” —

“Be silent, woman!” said Ravenswood sternly; “is it the devil that prompts your voice? — Know that this young lady has not on earth a friend, who would venture farther to save her from injury or from insult.”

“And is it even so?” said the old woman, in an altered but melancholy tone — “then God help you both!”

“Amen! Alice,” said Lucy, who had not comprehended the import of what the blind woman



had hinted, «and send you your senses, Alice, and your good-humour. If you hold this mysterious language instead of welcoming your friends, they will think of you as other people do. »

«And how do other people think?» said Ravenswood, for he also began to think the old woman spoke with incoherence.

«They think,» said Henry Ashton, who came up at that moment, and whispered into Ravenswood's ear, «that she is a witch that should have been burned with them that suffered at Haddington. »

«What is that you say?» said Alice, turning towards the boy, her sightless visage inflamed with passion, «that I am a witch, and ought to have suffered with the helpless old wretches who were murdered at Haddington?»

«Hear to that now,» again whispered Henry, «and me whispering lower than a wren cheeps.»

«If the usurer, and the oppressor, and the grinder of the poor man's face, and the remover of ancient land-marks, and the subverter of ancient houses, were at the same stake with me, I could say, light the fire, in God's name!»

«This is dreadful,» said Lucy; «I have never seen the poor deserted woman in this state of



mind; but age and poverty can ill bear reproach. — Come, Henry, we will leave her for the present — she wishes to speak with the Master alone. We will walk homeward, and rest us," she added, looking at Ravenswood, "by the Mermaid's Well."

"And Alice," said the boy, "if you know of any hare that comes through among the deer, and makes them drop their claws out of season, you may tell her, with my compliments to command, that if Norman has not got a silver bullet ready for her, I'll lend him one of my doublet-buttons on purpose."

Alice made no answer till she was aware that they were out of hearing. She then said to Ravenswood, "And you, too, are angry with me for my love? — it is just that strangers should be offended, but you, too, are angry."

"I am not angry, Alice," said the Master, "only surprised that you, whose good sense I have heard so often praised, should give way to offensive and unfounded suspicions."

"Offensive?" said Alice — "Ay, truth is ever offensive — but, surely, not unfounded."

"I tell you, dame, most groundless," replied Ravenswood.



“Then the world has changed its wont, and the Ravenswoods their hereditary temper, and the eyes of old Alice’s understanding are yet more blind than those of her countenance. When did a Ravenswood seek the house of his enemy, but with the purpose of revenge? — and hither you are come, Edgar Ravenswood, either in fatal anger, or in still more fatal love.”

“In neither,” said Ravenswood, “I give you mine honour — I mean, I assure you.”

Alice could not see his blushing cheek, but she noticed his hesitation, and that he retracted the pledge which he seemed at first disposed to attach to his denial.

“It is so, then,” she said, “and therefore she is to tarry by the Mermaid’s Well! Often has it been called a place fatal to the race of Ravenswood — often has it proved so — but never was it likely to verify old sayings so much as on this day.”

“You drive me to madness, Alice,” said Ravenswood; “you are more silly and more superstitious than old Balderstone. Are you such a wretched Christian as to suppose I should maintain war with the Ashton family, as was the sanguinary custom in elder times? or do you



suppose me so foolish, that I cannot walk by a young lady's side without plunging headlong in love with her?"

"My thoughts," replied Alice, "are my own; and if my mortal sight is closed to objects present with me, it may be I can look with more steadiness into future events. Are you prepared to sit lowest at the board which was once your father's own, unwillingly, as a connection and ally of his proud successor? — Are you ready to live on his bounty — to follow him in the bye-paths of intrigue and chicane, which none can better point out to you — to gnaw the bones of his prey when he has devoured the substance? — Can you say as Sir William Ashton says — think as he thinks — vote as he votes, and call your father's murderer your worshipful father-in-law and revered patron? — Ravenswood, I am the eldest servant of your house, and I would rather see you shrouded and confined."

The tumult in Ravenswood's mind was uncommonly great; she struck upon and awakened a chord which he had for some time successfully silenced. He strode backwards and forwards through the little garden with a hasty pace; and at length checking himself, and stopping right opposite to Alice, he exclaimed, "Woman! on



the verge of the grave, dare you urge the son of your master to blood and to revenge?"

"God forbid!" said Alice solemnly; "and therefore I would have you depart these fatal bounds, where your love, as well as your hatred, threatens sure mischief, or at least disgrace, both to yourself and others. I would shield, were it in the power of this withered hand, the Ashtons from you and you from them, and both from their own passions. You can have nothing — ought to have nothing, in common with them — Begone from among them; and if God has destined vengeance on the oppressor's house, do not you be the instrument."

"I will think on what you have said, Alice," said Ravenswood more composedly. "I believe you mean truly and faithfully by me, but you urge the freedom of an ancient domestic somewhat too far. But farewell; and if Heaven afford me better means, I will not fail to contribute to your comfort."

He attempted to put a piece of gold into her hand, which she refused to receive; and, in the slight struggle attending his wish to force it upon her, it dropped to the earth.

"Let it remain an instant on the ground," said Alice, as the Master stooped to raise it; "and



believe me, that piece of gold is an emblem of her whom you love; she is as precious, I grant, but you must stoop even to abasement before you can win her. For me, I have as little to do with gold as with earthly passions; and the best news that the world has in store for me is, that Edgar Ravenswood is an hundred miles distant from the seat of his ancestors, with the determination never again to review it."

"Alice," said the Master, who began to think this earnestness had some more secret cause than arose from any thing that the blind woman could have gathered from this casual visit, "I have heard you praised by my mother for your sense, acuteness, and fidelity; you are no fool to start at shadows, or to dread old superstitious saws, like Caleb Balderstone; tell me distinctly where my danger lies, if you are aware of any which is tending towards me. If I know myself, I am free from all such views respecting Miss Ashton as you impute to me. I have necessary business to settle with Sir William — that arranged, I shall depart; and with as little wish, as you may easily believe, to return to a place full of melancholy subjects of reflection, as you have to see me here."

Alice bent her sightless eyes on the ground, and was for a moment plunged in deep medita-



tion. "I will speak the truth," she said, at length raising up her head — "I will tell you the source of my apprehensions, whether my candour be for good or evil — Lucy Ashton loves you, Lord of Ravenswood!"

"It is impossible," said the Master.

"A thousand circumstances have proved it to me. Her thoughts have turned on no one else since you saved her from death, and that my experienced judgment has won from her own conversation. Having told you this — if you are indeed a gentleman and your father's son — you will make it a motive for flying from her presence. Her passion will die like a lamp, for want of that the flame should feed upon; but, if you remain here, her destruction, or yours, or that of both, will be the inevitable consequence of her misplaced attachment. I tell you this secret unwillingly, but it could not have been hid long from your own observation; and it is better you learn it from mine. Depart, Master of Ravenswood — you have my secret. If you remain an hour under Sir William Ashton's roof without the resolution to marry his daughter, you are a villain — if with the purpose of allying yourself with him, you are an infatuated and predestined fool."



So saying, the old blind woman arose, assumed her staff, and, tottering to her hut, entered it and closed the door, leaving Ravenswood to his own reflections.



## CHAPTER XX.

*„Lovelier in her own retired abode  
 — — than Naiad by the side  
 Of Grecian brook — or Lady of the Mere  
 Lone sitting by the shores of old romance.”*

*Wordsworth.*

THE meditations of Ravenswood were of a very mixed complexion. He saw himself at once in the very dilemma which he had for some time felt apprehensive he might be placed in. The pleasure he felt in Lucy's company had indeed approached to fascination, yet it had never altogether surmounted his internal reluctance to wed with the daughter of his father's foe; and even in forgiving Sir William Ashton the injuries which his house had received, and giving



him credit for the kind intentions he professed to entertain, he could not bring himself to contemplate as possible an alliance betwixt their houses. Still he felt that Alice spoke truth, and that his honour now required he should take an instant leave of Ravenswood Castle, or become a suitor of Lucy Ashton. The possibility of being rejected, too, should he make advances to her wealthy and powerful father — to sue for the hand of an Ashton and be refused — this were a consummation too disgraceful. "I wish her well," he said to himself, "and for her sake I forgive the injuries her father has done to my house; but I will never — no, never see her more!"

With one bitter pang he adopted this resolution, just as he came to where two paths parted; the one to the Mermaiden's Fountain, where he knew Lucy waited him, the other leading to the castle by another and more circuitous road. He paused an instant when about to take the latter path, thinking what apology he should make for conduct which must needs seem extraordinary, and had just muttered to himself, "Sudden news from Edinburgh — any pretext will serve — only let me dally no longer here," when young Henry came flying up to him, half out of breath — "Master, Master — you must give



Lucy your arm back to the castle, for I cannot give her mine; for Norman is waiting for me, and I am to go with him to make his ring-walk, and I would not stay away for a gold Jacobus, and Lucy is afraid to walk home alone, though all the wild nowt have been shot, and so you must come away directly."

Betwixt two scales equally loaded, a feather's weight will turn the scale. "It is impossible for me to leave the young lady in the wood alone," said Ravenswood; "to see her once more can be of little consequence, after the frequent meetings we have had — I ought too, in courtesy, to apprize her of my intention to quit the castle."

And having thus satisfied himself that he was taking not only a wise, but an absolutely necessary step, he took the path to the fatal fountain. Henry no sooner saw him on the way to join his sister, than he was off like lightning in another direction, to enjoy the society of the forester in their congenial pursuits. Ravenswood, not allowing himself to give a second thought to the propriety of his own conduct, walked with a quick step towards the stream, where he found Lucy seated alone by the ruin.



She sate upon one of the disjointed stones of the ancient fountain, and seemed to watch the progress of its current, as it bubbled forth to day-light, in gay and sparkling profusion, from under the shadow of the ribbed and darksome vault with which veneration, or perhaps remorse, had canopied its source. To a superstitious eye, Lucy Ashton, folded in her plaiden mantle, with her long hair, escaping partly from the snood and falling upon her silver neck, might have suggested the idea of the murdered Nymph of the Fountain. But Ravenswood only saw a female exquisitely beautiful, and rendered yet more so in his eyes — how could it be otherwise — by the consciousness that she had placed her affections on him. As he gazed on her, he felt his fixed resolution melting like wax in the sun, and hastened, therefore, from his concealment in the neighbouring thicket. She saluted him, but did not arise from the stone on which she was seated.

“My mad-cap brother,” she said, “has left me, but I expect him back in a few minutes — for fortunately, as every thing, at least any thing, pleases him for a minute, nothing has charms for him much longer.”

Ravenswood did not feel the power of informing Lucy that her brother meditated a distant



excursion, and would not return in haste. He sate himself down on the grass, at some little distance from Miss Ashton, and both were silent for a short space.

“I like this spot,” said Lucy at length, as if she had found the silence embarrassing; “the bubbling murmur of the clear fountain, the waving of the trees, the profusion of grass and wild-flowers, that rise among the ruins, make it like a scene in romance. I think, too, I have heard it is a spot connected with the legendary lore which I love so well.”

“It has been thought,” answered Ravenswood, “a fatal spot to our family, and I have some reason to term it so, for it was here I first saw Miss Ashton — and it is here I must take my leave of her for ever.”

The blood, which the first part of this speech called into Lucy’s cheeks, was speedily expelled by its conclusion.

“To take leave of us, Master!” she exclaimed; “what can have happened to hurry you away? — I know Alice hates — I mean dislikes my father — and I hardly understood her humour to-day, it was so mysterious. But I am certain my father is sincerely grateful for the high ser-



vice you rendered us. Let me hope that having won your friendship hardly, we shall not lose it lightly."

"Lose it, Miss Ashton? — No — wherever my fortune calls me — whatever she inflicts upon me — it is your friend — your sincere friend, who acts or suffers. But there is a fate on me, and I must go, or I shall add the ruin of others to my own."

"Yet do not go from us, Master," said Lucy; and she laid her hand, in all simplicity and kindness, upon the skirt of his cloak, as if to detain him — "You shall not part from us — My father is powerful! he has friends that are more so than himself — do not go till you see what his gratitude will do for you. Believe me, he is already labouring in your behalf with the Council."

"It may be so," said the Master, proudly; "yet it is not to your father, Miss Ashton, but to my own exertions, that I ought to owe success in the career on which I am about to enter. My preparations are already made — a sword and a cloak, and a bold heart and a determined hand."

Lucy covered her face with her hands, and the tears, in spite of her, forced their way be-



tween her fingers. "Forgive me," said Ravenswood, taking her right hand, which, after slight resistance, she yielded to him, still continuing to shade her face with the left — "I am too rude — too rough — too intractable to deal with any being so soft and gentle as you are. Forget that so stern a vision has crossed your path of life — and let me pursue mine, sure that I can meet with no worse misfortune after the moment it divides me from your side."

Lucy wept on, but her tears were less bitter. Each attempt which the Master made to explain his purpose of departure, only proved a new evidence of his desire to stay; until, at length, instead of bidding her farewell, he gave his faith to her for ever, and received her troth in return. The whole passed so suddenly, and arose so much out of the immediate impulse of the moment, that ere the Master of Ravenswood could reflect upon the consequences of the step which he had taken, their lips, as well as their hands, had pledged the sincerity of their affection.

"And now," he said, after a moment's consideration, "it is fit I should speak to Sir William Ashton — he must know of our engagement. Ravenswood must not seem to dwell



under his roof, to solicit clandestinely the affections of his daughter."

"You would not speak to my father on the subject," said Lucy, doubtingly; and then added more warmly, "O do not — do not! Let your lot in life be determined — your station and purpose ascertained, before you address my father; I am sure he loves you — I think he will consent — but then my mother" —

She paused, ashamed to express the doubt she felt how far her father dared to form any positive resolution on this most important subject, without the consent of his lady.

"Your mother, my Lucy?" replied Ravenswood; "she is of the house of Douglas, a house that has intermarried with mine, even when its glory and power were at the highest — what could your mother object to my alliance?"

"I did not say object," said Lucy; "but she is jealous of her rights, and may claim a mother's title to be consulted in the first instance."

"Be it so," replied Ravenswood; "London is distant, but a letter will reach it and receive an answer within a fortnight — I will not press



on the Lord Keeper for an instant reply to my proposal."

"But," hesitated Lucy, "were it not better to wait — to wait a few weeks — were my mother to see you — to know you — I am sure she would approve; but you are unacquainted personally, and the ancient feud between the families" —

Ravenswood fixed upon her his keen dark eyes, as if he was desirous of penetrating into her very soul.

"Lucy," he said, "I have sacrificed to you projects of vengeance long nursed, and sworn to with ceremonies little better than heathen — I sacrificed them to your image, ere I knew the worth which it represented. In the evening which succeeded my poor father's funeral, I cut a lock from my hair, and, as it consumed in the fire, I swore that my rage and revenge should pursue his enemies, until they shrivelled before me like that scorched-up symbol of annihilation."

"It was a deadly sin," said Lucy, turning pale, "to make a vow so fatal."



“I acknowledge it,” said Ravenswood, “and it had been a worse crime to keep it. It was for your sake that I abjured these purposes of vengeance, though I scarce knew that such was the argument by which I was conquered, until I saw you once more, and became conscious of the influence you possessed over me.”

“And why do you now,” said Lucy, “recall sentiments so terrible — sentiments so inconsistent with those you profess for me — with those your importunity has prevailed on me to acknowledge?”

“Because I would impress on you the price at which I have bought your love — the right I have to expect your constancy. I say not that I have bartered for it the honour of my house, its last remaining possession — but though I say it not, and think it not, I cannot conceal from myself that the world may do both.”

“If such are your sentiments,” said Lucy, “you have played a cruel game with me. But it is not too late to give it over — take back the faith and troth which you could not plight to me without suffering abatement of honour — let what is passed be as if it had not been — forget me — I will endeavour to forget myself.”



“You do me injustice,” said the Master of Ravenswood; “by all I hold true and honourable, you do me the extremity of injustice — if I mentioned the price at which I have bought your love, it is only to shew how much I prize it, to bind our engagement by a still firmer tie, and to shew, by what I have done to attain this station in your regard, how much I must suffer should you ever break your faith.”

“And why, Ravenswood,” answered Lucy, “should you think that possible? — Why should you urge me with even the mention of infidelity? — Is it because I ask you to delay applying to my father for a little space of time? Bind me by what vows you please; if vows are unnecessary to secure constancy, they may yet prevent suspicion.”

Ravenswood pleaded, apologized, and even kneeled, to appease her displeasure; and Lucy, as placable as she was singlehearted, readily forgave the offence which his doubts had implied. The dispute thus agitated, however, ended by the lovers going through an emblematic ceremony of their troth-plight of which the vulgar still preserve some traces. They broke betwixt them the thin broad-piece of gold which Alice had refused to receive from Ravenswood.



“And never shall this leave my bosom,” said Lucy, as she hung the piece of gold round her neck, and concealed it with her handkerchief, “until you, Edgar Ravenswood, ask me to resign it to you — and, while I wear it, never shall that heart acknowledge another love than your’s.”

With like protestations, Ravenswood placed his portion of the coin opposite to his heart. And now, at length, it struck them, that time had hurried fast on during this interview, and their absence at the castle would be subject of remark, if not of alarm. As they arose to leave the fountain which had been witness of their mutual engagement, an arrow whistled through the air, and struck a raven perched on the sere branch of an old oak, near to where they had been seated. The bird fluttered a few yards, and dropped at the feet of Lucy, whose dress was stained with some spots of its blood.

Miss Ashton was much alarmed, and Ravenswood, surprised and angry, looked everywhere for the marksman, who had given them a proof of his skill as little expected as desired. He was not long of discovering himself, being no other than Henry Ashton, who came running up with a cross-bow in his hand.



“I knew I should startle you,” he said; “and do you know you looked so busy that I thought it would have fallen souse on your heads before you were aware of it — What was the Master saying to you, Lucy?”

“I was telling your sister what an idle lad you were, keeping us waiting here for you so long,” said Ravenswood, to save Lucy’s confusion.

“Waiting for me? Why, I told you to see Lucy home, and that I was to go to make the ring-walk with old Norman in the Hayberry thicket, and you may be sure that would take a good hour, and we have all the deer’s marks and furnishes got, while you were sitting here with Lucy like a lazy loon.”

“Well, well, Mr Henry,” said Ravenswood; “but let us see how you will answer to me for killing the raven. Do you know the ravens are all under the protection of the Lords of Ravenswood, and, to kill one in their presence, is such bad luck that it deserves the stab?”

“And that’s what Norman said,” replied the boy; “he came as far with me as within a flight-shot of you, and he said he never saw a raven



sit still so near living folks, and he wished it might be for good luck; for the raven is one of the wildest birds that flies, unless it be a tame one — and so I crept on and on, till I was within three score yards of him, and then whiz went the bolt, and there he lies, faith! Was it not well shot? — and, I dare say, I have not shot in a cross-bow — not ten times, maybe.”

“Admirably shot indeed,” said Ravenswood; “and you will be a fine marksman if you practise hard.”

“That’s what Norman says,” answered the boy; “but I am sure it is not my fault if I do not practise enough; for, of free will, I would do little else, only my father and tutor are angry sometimes, and only Miss Lucy there gives herself airs about my being busy, for all she can sit idle by a well-side the whole day when she has a handsome young gentleman to prate wi’ — I have known her do so twenty times, if you will believe me.”

The boy looked at his sister as he spoke, and, in the midst of his mischievous chatter, had the sense to see that he was really inflicting pain upon her, though without being able to comprehend the cause or the amount.



“Come now, Lucy,” he said, “don’t greet; and if I have said any thing beside the mark, I’ll deny it again — and what does the Master of Ravenswood care if you had a hundred sweet-hearts — so ne’er put fingers in your eye about it.”

The Master of Ravenswood was, for the moment, scarce satisfied with what he heard; yet his good sense naturally regarded it as the chatter of a spoiled boy, who strove to mortify his sister in the point which seemed most accessible for the time. But, although of a temper equally slow in receiving impressions, and obstinate in retaining them, the prattle of Henry served to nourish in his mind some vague suspicion, that his present engagement might only end in his being exposed like a vanquished enemy in a Roman triumph, a captive attendant on the car of a victor, who meditated only the satiating his pride at the expense of the vanquished. There was, we repeat it, no real ground whatever for such an apprehension, nor could he be said seriously to entertain such for a moment. Indeed it was impossible to look at the clear blue eye of Lucy Ashton, and entertain the slightest permanent doubt concerning the sincerity of her disposition. Still, however, conscious pride and conscious poverty combined to render a mind



suspicious, which, in more fortunate circumstances, would have been a stranger to that as well as to other meanness.

They reached the castle, where Sir William Ashton, who had been alarmed by the length of their stay, met them in the hall.

"Had Lucy," he said, "been in any other company than that of one who had shewn he had so complete power of protecting her, he confessed he should have been very uneasy, and would have dispatched persons in quest of them. But, in the company of the Master of Ravenswood, he knew his daughter had nothing to dread."

Lucy commenced some apology for their long delay, but, conscience-struck, became confused as she proceeded; and when Ravenswood, coming to her assistance, endeavoured to render the explanation complete and satisfactory, he only involved himself in the same disorder, like one who, endeavouring to extricate his companion from a slough, entangles himself in the same tenacious swamp. It cannot be supposed that the confusion of the two youthful lovers escaped the observation of the wily lawyer, accustomed, by habit and profession, to trace



human nature through all her windings. But it was not his present policy to take any notice of what he observed. He desired to hold the Master of Ravenswood bound, but wished that he himself should be free; and it did not occur to him that his plan might be defeated by Lucy's returning the passion which he hoped she might inspire. If she should adopt some romantic feelings towards Ravenswood, in which circumstances, or the positive and absolute opposition of Lady Ashton, might render it unadvisable to indulge her, the Lord Keeper conceived they might be easily superseded and annulled by a journey to Edinburgh, or even to London, a new set of Brussels lace, and the soft whispers of half a dozen of lovers, anxious to replace him whom it was convenient she should renounce. This was his provision for the worst view of the case. But, according to its more probable issue, any passing favour she might entertain for the Master of Ravenswood, might require encouragement rather than repression.

This seemed the more likely, as he had that very morning, since their departure from the castle, received a letter, the contents of which he hastened to communicate to Ravenswood. A foot-post had arrived with a packet to the Lord Keeper from that friend whom we have already



mentioned, who was labouring hard under-hand to consolidate a band of patriots, at the head of whom stood Sir William's greatest terror, the active and ambitious Marquis of A ——. The success of this convenient friend had been such, that he had obtained from Sir William, not indeed a directly favourable answer, but certainly a most patient hearing. This he had reported to his principal, who had replied, by the ancient French adage, «*Château qui parle, et femme qui écoute, l'un et l'autre va se rendre.*» A statesman who hears you propose a change of measures without reply, was, according to the Marquis's opinion, in the situation of the fortress which parleys, and the lady who listens, and he resolved to press the siege of the Lord Keeper.

The packet, therefore, contained a letter from his friend and ally, and another from himself to the Lord Keeper, frankly offering an uncere-  
monious visit. They were crossing the country to go to the southward — the roads were indif-  
ferent — the accommodation of the inns as exe-  
crable as possible — the Lord Keeper had been long acquainted intimately with one of his cor-  
respondents, and though more slightly known to the Marquis, had yet enough of his Lord-  
ship's acquaintance to render the visit sufficient-



ly natural, and to shut the mouths of those who might be disposed to impute it to a political intrigue. He instantly accepted the offered visit, determined, however, that he would not pledge himself an inch farther for the furtherance of their views than *reason* (by which he meant his own self-interest) should plainly point out to him as proper.

Two circumstances particularly delighted him; the presence of Ravenswood, and the absence of his own lady. By having the former under his roof, he conceived he might be able to quash all such hazardous and hostile proceedings as he might otherwise have been engaged in, under the patronage of the Marquis; and Lucy, he foresaw, would make, for his immediate purpose of delay and procrastination, a much better mistress of his family than her mother, who would, he was sure, in some shape or other, contrive to disconcert his political schemes by her proud and implacable temper.

His anxious solicitations that the Master would stay to receive his kinsman, were of course readily complied with, since the *éclaircissement* which had taken place at the Mermaid's Fountain had removed all wish for sudden departure. Lucy and Lockhard had, therefore, orders to



provide all things necessary in their different departments, for receiving the expected guests, with a pomp and display of luxury very uncommon in Scotland at that remote period.



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CHAPTER XXI.

*Marall. Sir, the man of honour's come,
Newly alighted —*

*Overreach. In without reply,
And do as I command. —*

*Is the loud music I gave order for
Ready to receive him? —*

New Way to Pay Old Debts.

SIR WILLIAM ASHTON, although a man of sense, legal information, and great practical knowledge of the world, had yet some points of character which corresponded better with the timidity of his disposition and the supple arts by which he had risen in the world, than to the degree of eminence which he had attained; as they tended to shew an original mediocrity of understanding, however highly it had been cultivated, and a native meanness of disposition,

however carefully veiled. He loved the ostentatious display of his wealth, less as a man to whom habit has made it necessary, than as one to whom it is still delightful from its novelty. The most trivial details did not escape him; and Lucy soon learned to watch the flush of scorn which crossed Ravenswood's cheek, when he heard her father gravely arguing with Lockhard, nay, even with the old housekeeper, upon circumstances which, in families of rank, are left uncared for, because it is supposed impossible they can be neglected.

“I could pardon Sir William,” said Ravenswood one evening after he had left the room, “some general anxiety upon this occasion, for the Marquis's visit is an honour, and should be received as such; but I am worn out by these miserable minutiae of the buttery, and the larder, and the very hen-coop — they drive me beyond my patience; I would rather endure the poverty of Wolf's Crag, than be pestered with the wealth of Ravenswood Castle.”

“And yet,” said Lucy “it was by attention to these minutiae that my father acquired the property” —

“Which my ancestors sold for lack of it,” answered Ravenswood. “Be it so; a porter still

bears but a burthen, though the burthen be of gold."

Lucy sighed; she perceived too plainly that her lover held in scorn the manners and habits of a father, to whom she had long looked up as her best and most partial friend, whose fondness had often consoled her for her mother's contemptuous harshness.

The lovers soon discovered that they differed upon other and no less important topics. Religion, the mother of peace, was, in those days of discord, so much misconstrued and mistaken, that her rules and forms were the subject of the most opposite opinions and the most hostile animosities. The Lord Keeper, being a whig, was, of course, a presbyterian, and had found it convenient, at different periods, to express greater zeal for the kirk, than perhaps he really felt. His family, equally of course, were trained under the same institution. Ravenswood, as we know, was a High-Church man, or Episcopalian, and frequently objected to Lucy the fanaticism of some of her own communion, while she intimated, rather than expressed, horror at the latitudinarian principles which she had been taught to think connected with the prelatical form of church-government.

Thus, although their mutual affection seemed to increase rather than to be diminished, as their characters opened more fully on each other, the feelings of each were mingled with some less agreeable ingredients. Lucy felt a secret awe, amid all her affection for Ravenswood. His soul was of an higher, prouder character, than those with whom she had hitherto mixed in intercourse; his ideas were more fierce and free; and he contemned many of the opinions which had been inculcated upon her, as chiefly demanding her veneration. On the other hand, Ravenswood saw in Lucy a soft and flexible character, which, in his eyes at least, seemed too susceptible of being moulded to any form by those with whom she lived. He felt that his own temper required a partner of a more independent spirit, who could set sail with him on his course of life, resolved as himself to dare indifferently the storm and the favouring breeze. But Lucy was so beautiful, so devotedly attached to him, of a temper so exquisitely soft and kind, that, while he could have wished it were possible to inspire her with a greater degree of firmness and resolution, and while he sometimes became impatient of the extreme fear which she expressed of their attachment being prematurely discovered, he felt that the softness of a mind, amounting almost to feebleness, rendered her

even dearer to him, as a being who had voluntarily clung to him for protection, and made him the arbiter of her fate for weal or woe. His feelings towards her at such moments, were those which have been since so beautifully expressed by our immortal Joanna Baillie:

————— “Thou sweetest thing,
That e'er did fix its lightly-fibred sprays
To the rude rock, ah! would'st thou cling to
me?

Rough and storm-worn I am — yet love me as
Thou truly dost, I will love thee again
With true and honest heart, though all un-
meet

To be the mate of such sweet gentleness.”

Thus the very points in which they differed, seemed, in some measure, to ensure the continuance of their mutual affection. If, indeed, they had so fully appreciated each other's character before the burst of passion in which they hastily pledged their faith to each other, Lucy might have feared Ravenswood too much ever to have loved him, and he might have construed her softness and docile temper as imbecility, rendering her unworthy of his regard. But they stood pledged to each other; and Lucy only fear-

ed that her lover's pride might one day teach him to regret his attachment, Ravenswood that a mind so ductile as Lucy's might, in absence or difficulties, be induced, by the entreaties or influence of those around her, to renounce the engagement she had formed.

„Do not fear it,” said Lucy, when, upon one occasion, a hint of such suspicion escaped her lover; „the mirrors which receive the reflection of all successive objects are framed of hard materials like glass or steel — the softer substances, when they receive an impression, retain it undefaced.”

„This is poetry, Lucy,” said Ravenswood; „and in poetry there is always fallacy, and sometimes fiction.”

„Believe me then, once more, in honest prose,” said Lucy, „that, though I will never wed man without the consent of my parents, yet neither force nor persuasion shall dispose of my hand till you renounce the right I have given you to it.”

The lovers had ample time for such explanations. Henry was now more seldom their companion, being either a most unwilling attendant upon the lessons of his tutor, or a forward

volunteer under the instructions of the foresters or grooms. As for the Keeper, his mornings were spent in his study, maintaining correspondences of all kinds, and balancing in his anxious mind the various intelligence which he collected from every quarter concerning the expected change of Scottish politics, and the probable strength of the parties who were about to struggle for power. At other times he busied himself about arranging, and countermanding, and then again arranging, the preparations which he judged necessary for the reception of the Marquis of A — —, whose arrival had been twice delayed by some necessary cause of detention.

In the midst of all these various avocations, political and domestic, he seemed not to observe how much his daughter and his guest were thrown into each other's society, and was censured by many of his neighbours, according to the fashion of neighbours in all countries, for suffering such an intimate connection to take place betwixt two young persons. The only natural explanation was, that he designed them for each other; while, in truth, his only motive was to temporize and procrastinate, until he should discover the real extent of the interest which the Marquis took in Ravenswood's affairs, and the power which he was likely to possess

of advancing them. Until these points should be made both clear and manifest, the Lord Keeper resolved that he would do nothing to commit himself, either in one shape or other, and, like many cunning persons, he overreached himself deplorably.

Amongst those who had been disposed to censure, with the greatest severity, the conduct of Sir William Ashton, in permitting the prolonged residence of Ravenswood under his roof, and his constant attendance on Miss Ashton, was the new Laird of Girninghame, and his faithful squire and bottle-holder, personages formerly well known to us by the names of Hayston and Bucklaw, and his companion Captain Craigengelt. The former had already succeeded to the extensive property of his long-lived grand-aunt, and to considerable wealth besides, which he had employed in redeeming his paternal acres, (by the title appertaining to which he still chose to be designated,) notwithstanding Captain Craigengelt had proposed to him a most advantageous mode of vesting the money in Law's scheme, which was just then set abroach, and offered his services to travel express to Paris for the purpose. But Bucklaw had so far derived wisdom from adversity, that he would listen to no proposal which Craigen-

gelt could invent, having a tendency to risk his newly-acquired independence. He that had once eat pease-bannocks, drank sour wine, and slept in the secret chamber at Wolf's Crag, would, he said, prize good cheer and a soft bed as long as he lived, and take special care never to need such hospitality again.

Craigengelt, therefore, found himself disappointed in the first hopes he had entertained of making a good hand of the Laird of Bucklaw. Still, however, he reaped many advantages from his friend's good fortune. Bucklaw, who had never been at all scrupulous in chusing his companions, was accustomed to, and entertained by a fellow, whom he could either laugh with or laugh at as he had a mind, who would take, according to Scottish phrase, "the bit and the buffet," understood all sports, whether without or within doors, and, when the Laird had a mind for a bottle of wine, (no infrequent circumstance,) was always ready to save him from the scandal of getting drunk by himself. Upon these terms Craigengelt was the frequent, almost the constant, inmate of the house of Giringhame.

In no time, and under no possibility of circumstances, could good have been derived from

such an intimacy, however its bad consequences might be qualified by the thorough knowledge which Bucklaw possessed of his dependant's, character, and the high contempt in which he held it. But as circumstances stood, this evil communication was particularly liable to corrupt what good principles nature had implanted in the patron.

Craigengelt had never forgiven the scorn with which Ravenswood had torn the mask of courage and honesty from his countenance; and to exasperate Bucklaw's resentment against him, was the safest mode of revenge which occurred to his cowardly, yet cunning and malignant disposition.

He brought up, on all occasions, the story of the challenge which Ravenswood had declined to accept, and endeavoured, by every possible insinuation, to make his patron believe that his honour was concerned in bringing that matter to an issue by a present discussion with Ravenswood. But respecting this subject, Bucklaw imposed on him, at length, a peremptory command of silence.

"I think," he said, "the Master has treated me unlike a gentleman, and I see no right he

had to send me back a cavalier answer when I demanded the satisfaction of one — But he gave me my life once — and, in looking the matter over at present, I put myself but on equal terms with him — should he cross me again, I shall consider the old accompt as balanced, and his Mastership will do well to look to himself."

"That he should," re echoed Craigengelt; "for when you are in practice, Bucklaw, I would bet a magnum you are through him before the third pass."

"Then you know nothing of the matter," said Bucklaw, "and you never saw him fence."

"And I know nothing of the matter?" — a good jest, I promise you — and though I never saw Ravenswood fence, have I not been at Monsieur Sagoon's school, who was the first *maître d'armes* at Paris; and have I not been at Signor Poco's at Florence, and Meinherr Durchstossen at Vienna, and have I not seen all their play?"

"I don't know whether you have or not," said Bucklaw; "but what about it, though you had?"

"Only that I will be d — d if ever I saw French, Italian, or High-Dutchman ever make

foot, hand, and eye, keep time half so well as you, Bucklaw."

"I believe you lie, Craigie," said Bucklaw; "however, I can hold my own, both with single rapier, back-sword, sword and dagger, broadsword, or case of faulchions — and that's as much as any gentleman need know of the matter."

"And the double of what ninety-nine out of a hundred know," said Craigengelt; "they learn to change a few thrusts with the small sword, and then, forsooth, they understand the noble art of defence! Now, when I was at Rouen in the years 1695, there was a Chevalier de Chapon and I went to the Opera, where we found three bits of English birkies —"

"Is it a long story you are going to tell?" said Bucklaw, interrupting him without ceremony.

"Just as you like," answered the parasite, "for we made short work of it."

"Then I like it short," said Bucklaw; "is it serious or merry?"

"Devilish serious, I assure you, and so they found it; for the chevalier and I" —

“Then I don’t like it at all,” said Bucklaw; “so fill a brimmer of my auld auntie’s claret, rest her heart! And, as the Hielandman says, *Skioch doch na skiaill.*” *

“That was what though old Sir Evan Dhu used to say to me when I was out with the metall’d lads in 1689. ‘Craigengelt,’ he used to say, ‘you are as pretty a fellow as ever held steel in his grip, but you have one fault.’”

“If he had known you as long as I have done,” said Bucklaw, “he would have found out some twenty more; but hang long stories, give us your toast, man.”

Craigengelt rose, went a tiptoe to the door, peeped out, shut it carefully, came back again — clapped his tarnished goldlaced hat on one side of his head, took his glass in one hand, and touching the hilt of his hanger with the other, named, “The King over the water.”

* “Cut a drink with a tale;” equivalent to the English adage of “boon companions, don’t preach over your liquor.”

“I tell you what it is, Captain Craigengelt,” said Bucklaw; “I shall keep my mind to myself on these subjects, having too much respect for the memory of my venerable aunt Girnington to put her lands and tenements in the way of committing treason against established authority. Bring me King James to Edinburgh, Captain, with thirty thousand men at his back, and I’ll tell you what I think about his title; but as for running my neck into a noose, and my good broad lands into the statutory penalties, in that case, made and provided, rely upon it you will find me no such fool. So when you mean to vapour with your hanger and your dram-cup in support of treasonable toasts, you must find your liquor and company elsewhere.”

“Well, then,” said Craigengelt, “name the toast yourself, and be it what it like, I’ll pledge you were it a mile to the bottom.”

“And I’ll give you a toast that deserves it, my boy,” said Bucklaw; “what say you to Miss Lucy Ashton?”

“Up with it,” said the Captain, as he tossed off his brimmer, “the bonniest lass in Lothian — What a pity the old sneckdrawing whigamore, her father, is about to throw her away upon

that rag of pride and beggary, the Master of Ravenswood."

"That's not quite to clear," said Bucklaw, in a tone, which, though it seemed indifferent, excited his companion's eager curiosity; and not that only, but also his hope of working himself into some sort of confidence, which might make him necessary to his patron, being by no means satisfied to rest on mere sufferance, if he could form, by art or industry, a more permanent title to his favour.

"I thought," said he, after a moment's pause, "that was a settled matter — they are continually together, — and nothing else is spoken of betwixt Lammerlaw and Traprain."

"They may say what they please," replied his patron, "but I know better, and I'll give you Miss Lucy Ashton's health again, my boy."

"And I would drink it on my knee," said Craigengelt, "if I thought the girl had the spirit to jilt that d — d son of a Spaniard."

"I am to request you will not use the word jilt and Miss Ashton's name together," said Bucklaw, gravely.

«Jilt, did I say? — discard, my lad of acres — by Jove, I meant to say discard,” replied Craigengelt, «and I hope she’ll discard him like a small card at piquet, and take in the King of Hearts, my boy — But yet” —

«But what?” said his patron.

«But yet I know for certain they are hours together alone, and in the woods and the fields.”

«That’s her foolish father’s dotage — that will be soon put out of the lass’s head, if it ever gets into it,” answered Bucklaw. «And now fill your glass again, Captain, I am going to make you happy — I am going to let you into a secret — a plot — a noosing plot — only the noose is but typical.”

«A marrying matter?” said Craigengelt, and his jaw fell as he asked the question; for he suspected that matrimony would render his situation at Girninghame much more precarious than during the jolly days of his patron’s bachelorhood.

«Ay, a marriage, man,” said Bucklaw; «but wherefore droops thy mighty spirit, and why grow the rubies on thy cheek so pale? The board will have a corner, and the corner will have a

trencher, and the trencher will have a glass beside it; and the board-end shall be filled, and the trencher and the glass shall be replenished for thee, if all the petticoats in Lothian had sworn the contrary — What, man! I am not the boy to put myself into leading strings.”

“So says many an honest fellow,” said Craigenfelt, “and some of my special friends; but, curse me if I know the reason, the women could never bear me, and always contrived to trundle me out of favour before the honey-moon was over.”

“If you could have kept your ground till that was over, you might have made a good year’s pension,” said Bucklaw.

“But I never could,” answered the dejected parasite; “there was my Lord Castle-Cuddy — we were hand and glove — I rode his horses — borrowed money, both for him and from him — trained his hawks, and taught him how to lay his bets; and when he took a fancy of marrying, I married him to Katie Glegg, whom I thought myself as sure of as man could be of woman. Egad, she had me out of the house, as if I had run on wheels, within the first fortnight.”

“Well!” replied Bucklaw, “I think I have nothing of Castle-Cuddy about me, or Lucy of Katie Glegg. But you see the thing will go on whether you like it or no — the only question is, will you be useful?”

“Useful? — and to thee, my lad of lands, my darling boy, whom I would tramp bare-footed through the world for? — name time, place, mode, and circumstance, and see if I will not be useful in all uses that can be devised.”

“Why, then, you must ride two hundred miles for me,” said the patron.

“A thousand, and call them a flea’s leap,” answered the dependent; “I’ll cause saddle my horse directly.”

“Better stay till you know where you are to go, and what you are to do,” quoth Bucklaw. “You know I have a kinswoman in Northumberland, Lady Blenkinsop by name, whose old acquaintance I had the misfortune to lose in the period of my poverty, but the light of whose countenance shone forth upon me when the sun of my prosperity began to arise.”

“D — n all such double-faced jades,” exclaimed Craigengelt, heroically; “this I will say

for John Craigengelt, that he is his friend's friend through good report and bad report, poverty and riches; and you know something of that yourself, Bucklaw.

“I have not forgot your merits,” said his patron; “I do remember, that, in my extremities, you had a mind to *crimp* me for the service of the French king, or of the Pretender; and, moreover, that you afterwards lent me a score of pieces, when, as I firmly believe, you had heard the news that old Lady Girnington had a touch of the dead palsy. But don't be down-cast, John; I believe, after all, you like me very well in your way, and it is my misfortune to have no better counsellor at present. — To return to this Lady Blenkinsop, you must know she is a close confederate of Duchess Sarah.”

“What, of Sall Jennings!” exclaimed Craigengelt; “then she must be a good one.”

“Hold your tongue, and keep your Tory rants to yourself, if it be possible,” said Bucklaw; “I tell you, that through the Duchess of Marlborough has this Northumbrian cousin of mine become a crony of Lady Ashton, the Keeper's wife, or, I may say, the Lord Keeper's Lady

Keeper, and she has favoured Lady Blenkinsop with a visit on her return from London, and is just now at her old mansion-house on the banks of the Wansbeck. Now, sir, as it has been the use and wont of these ladies to consider their husbands as of no importance in the management of their own families, it has been their present pleasure, without consulting Sir William Ashton, to put on the *tapis* a matrimonial alliance, to be concluded between Lucy Ashton and my own right honourable self, Lady Ashton acting as self-constituted plenipotentiary on the part of her daughter and husband, and Mother Blenkinsop, equally unaccredited, doing me the honour to be my representative. You may suppose I was a little astonished when I found that a treaty, in which I was so considerably interested, had advanced a good way before I was even consulted."

"Capot me if I think that was according to the rules of the game," said his confidant; "and pray, what answer did you return?"

"Why, my first thought was to send the treaty to the devil, and the negociators along with it, for a couple of meddling old women; my next was to laugh very heartily; and my third and

last was a settled opinion that the thing was reasonable, and would suit me well enough."

"Why, I thought you had never seen the wench but once — and then she had her riding-mask on — I am sure you told me so."

"Ay — but I liked her very well then. And Ravenswood's dirty usage of me — shutting me out of doors to dine with the laqueys, because he had the Lord Keeper, forsooth, and his daughter, to be guests in his beggarly castle of starvation — D — n me, Craigengelt, if I ever forgive him till I play him as good a trick."

"No more you should, if you are a lad of mettle," said Craigengelt, the matter now taking a turn in which he could sympathize; "and if you carry this wench from him, it will break his heart."

"That it will not," said Bucklaw; "his heart is all steeled over with reason and philosophy — things that you, Craigie, know nothing about more than myself, God help me — But it will break his pride though, and that's what I'm driving at."

"Distance me," said Craigengelt, "but I know the reason now his unmannerly behaviour at

his old tumble-down tower yonder — Ashamed of your company? — no, no! — Gad, he was afraid you would cut in and carry off the girl.”

„Eh! Craigengelt?” said Bucklaw — „do you really think so? — but no, no! — he is a devilish deal prettier man than I am.”

„Who — he?” exclaimed the parasite — „he is as black as the crook; and for his size — he’s a tall fellow, to be sure — but give me a light, stout, middle-sized” —

„Plague on thee!” said Bucklaw, interrupting him, „and on me for listening to you! — you would say as much if I were hunch-backed. But as to Ravenswood — he has kept no terms with me — I’ll keep none with him — if I *can* win this girl from him, I *will* win her.”

„Win her? — ’sblood, you shall win her, point, quint, and quatorze, my king of trumps — you shall pique, repique, and capot him.”

„Prithee, stop thy gambling cant for one instant,” said Bucklaw. „Things have come thus far, that I have entertained the proposal of my kinswoman, agreed to the terms of jointure, amount of fortune, and so forth, and that the

affair is to go forward when Lady Ashton comes down, for she takes her daughter and her son in her own hand. Now, they want me to send up a confidential person with some writings."

"By this good wine, I'll ride to the end of the world — the very gates of Jericho, and the judgment-seat of Prester John, for thee," ejaculated the Captain.

"Why, I believe you would do something for me, and a great deal for yourself. Now, any one could carry the writings; but you will have a little more to do; you must contrive to drop out before my Lady Ashton, just as if it were a matter of little consequence, the residence of Ravenswood at her husband's house, and his close intercourse with Miss Ashton; and you may tell her, that all the country talks of a visit from the Marquis of A —, as it is supposed, to make up the match betwixt Ravenswood and her daughter. I should like to hear what she says to all this; for, rat me, if I have any idea of starting for the plate at all if Ravenswood is to win the race, and he has odds against me already."

"Never a bit — the wench has too much sense — and in that belief I drink her health a third

time; and, were time and place fitting, I would drink it on bended knees, and he that would not pledge me, I would make his guts garter his stockings."

"Hark ye Craigengelt; as you are going into the society of women of rank," said Bucklaw, "I'll thank you to forget your strange blackguard oaths and damme's — I'll write to them, though, that you are a blunt untaught fellow."

"Ay, ay," replied Craigengelt; "a plain, blunt, honest, down-right soldier."

"Not too honest, nor too much of the soldier neither; but, such as thou art, it is my luck to need thee, for I must have spurs put to Lady Ashton's motions."

"I'll dash them up to the rowel-heads," said Craigengelt; "she shall come here at the gallop, like a cow chased by a whole nest of hornets, and her tail twisted over her rump like a corkscrew."

"And hear ye, Craigie," said Bucklaw; "your boots and doublet are good enough to drink in, as the man says in the play, but they are somewhat too greasy for tea-table service — prithee,

get thyself a little better rigged-out, and here is to pay all charges."

"Nay, Bucklaw — on my soul, man — you use me ill — however," added Craigengelt, pocketting the money, „if you will have me so far indebted to you, I must be conforming."

"Well, horse and away!" said the patron, „so soon as you have got your riding livery in trim. You may ride the black crop-ear — and hark ye, I'll make you a present of him to boot."

"I drink to the good luck of my mission," answered the ambassador, „in a half-pint bumper."

"I thank ye, Craigie, and pledge you — I see nothing against it but the father or the girl taking a tantrum, and I am told the mother can wind them both round her little finger. Take care not to affront her with any of your jacobite jargon."

"O ay, true — she is a whig, and a friend of old Sall of Marlborough — thank my stars, I can hoist any colours at a pinch. I have fought as hard under John Churchill as ever I did under Dundee or the Duke of Berwick."

„I verily believe you, Craigie,” said the lord of the mansion; „but, Craigie, do you, pray, step down to the cellar and fetch us up a bottle of the Burgundy, 1678 — it is in the fourth bin from the right-hand turn — And I say, Craigie — you may fetch up half-a-dozen whilst you are about it — Egad, we’ll make a night on’t.”



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Scott, Walter,

Tales of my landlord

Bd.: 13

Zwickau 1823

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